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THE SENATE THROWS A SPANNER

MR. ROOSEVELT and Mr. Churchill are by now congratulating Marshal Stalin in person on his victories. At such a moment as this it is inevitable that questions should be asked on both sides of the Atlantic about the President's power to get his way with Congtess. Within three months of his election for a fourth term he has received from the Senate in the Henry Wallace affair a challenge for which there are few precedents in the recent history of the Republic. The Senate rarely questions the President's choice of Cabinet Ministers, for the good reason that they are his agents and lieutenants and are in no sense personally responsible to Congress. But in this instance the Senate has turned on no ordinary member of the Cabinet: he is a veteran with a record and a personality that rank him second only to the President. This is something more than a personal vendetta: it is evidence of a cleavage within the Democratic Party, so profound and so likely to be lasting, that we cannot credit the Administration with a majority in the Senate. On many issues the Southern Democrats are now solidly allied to the Republican Opposition. Does this mean that Mr. Roosevelt may fail, as Mr. Wilson did, to carry two-thirds of the Senate with him, when he pledges America's word to underwrite the world's security?

That is not the necessary or even the probable consequence of this rift in the Party. The Southern Democrats, even the more conservative of them, are rarely isolationist: the South has always inclined to an international outlook and, like its most distinguished political figure, Mr. Cordell Hull, to Free Trade. Nor would it be just or realistic to class Republican Senators as mainly isolationist. To-day there seems to be a majority both in the electorate and in the Senate in favour of American participation in such forms of collective police action to maintain peace as the Dumbarton Oaks scheme prescribes. The chief risk is from American "perfectionism," to use the President's name for it—in other words from dissatisfaction with the character of the Settlement.

The state of mind that turns the faction in the Senate against Henry Wallace would lead not indeed to isolation, but rather to a negative and unconstructive attitude towards all forms of international co-operation that go beyond police work. Henry Wallace is feared because as Secretary for Agriculture he made planned production and marketing a commonplace of the farmer's daily life. His opponents rightly see in him a threat to what they call "the American way of life"—a phrase that is commonly used to denote unlimited *laissez faire*, and the freedom of predatory business from every form of restriction. They realise that if he were Secretary for Commerce with the colossal financial resources of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation at his command he would be able to exercise a kind of creative control new in the history of civilised peoples. From the beginning of time to this day was ever an "idealist" in charge of £12,000 millions? This vast fund was used during the war partly to build up stocks of raw materials and partly to finance the expansion of industry. It multiplied the output of steel and aluminium several times over. It set going the production of synthetic rubber and oil. Mr. Wallace sees in it the ideal instrument with which to launch a policy of expansion and full employment. With this weapon he could fight the restrictionist policy of the monopolies, while by promoting public works he could keep the level of employment and wages steady.

Abroad his aim is to employ the American engineering industry in equipping the backward agricultural regions, above all with industrial machinery. This far-sighted and imaginative policy has made Mr. Wallace the butt of stupid and limited critics, who cannot realise that the standard of life even of Hottentots is and ought to be a matter of concern to Americans. In this sense the issue of internationalism is at stake in this feud of conservative property against Mr. Wallace, who has made himself doubly obnoxious to it by his alliance with the active ranks of the C.I.O. If the Senate votes according to expectation it remains to be seen how Mr. Roosevelt will react to this challenge. His clumsy letter to Mr. Jones did not help Mr. Wallace's chances and recalled his ambiguous attitude at the Chicago Convention. If he were to concede a victory on this issue to reaction at home, the result would not be the triumph of isolationism. But it might mean that America, when she does collaborate, will do so in a narrower and much less constructive spirit than Mr. Wallace would have brought to a task for which he is so admirably fitted.

On to Berlin?

Against the background of a grim "no surrender" speech from the Führer, there are two features in the European war news. The first is that the Red Army's gigantic offensive has not yet lost its impetus. With Cherniakovsky investing Koenigsberg and Rokossovsky on the coast by Elbing, the two German armies in East Prussia are encircled; and Zhukov's right wing, striking towards Stettin, threatens to cut off such German forces as can be extricated by land from Danzig. West of Posen the advance guard of Zhukov's left wing is less than 30 miles from Frankfurt-on-Oder; and, in the south, Koniev has overrun the whole Gleiwitz-Katowice industrial area and nearly cut Breslau's main rail link with Berlin.

Already, one would say, the Russian victory is all but decisive. Is the end in sight? This is where the other feature of the news comes in. Evidence accumulates that von Rundstedt. gambling on his ability to hold the Allies in the West with his Volksgrenadiers, is despatching the cream of his forces to the Eastern front. Already the whole 6th S.S. Panzer Army is reported to be entraining, and it seems possible that other armoured and crack infantry divisions may follow it. General Eisenhower is fully entitled to argue that these divisions are not what they were before the Allies fought the enemy's Ardennes counter-attack to a standstill, and that things would have gone much more slowly in East Prussia and Silesia if the Germans could have "switched" their forces a month ago, leaving the Anglo-American armies "winded." None the less, this transfer of *élite* divisions may possibly give Marshal Stalin pause. Dare Zhukov go all out for Berlin until he knows where and in what strength he may have to expect a German counter-attack?

If the weather permits full use of Anglo-American air strength, the movement of large forces from Rhine to Oder should be subject to interruptions and delays; and, if General Eisenhower can quickly intensify his pressure on the Siegfried Line, the German "switch" may be too limited in weight to halt the Russians. From every standpoint it is to be hoped that the West can make a demonstrable contribution to the war in this crucial stage.

Far East Campaigns

The linking of the new Ledo and old Burma roads at Namkan was naturally celebrated by a modest flourish of trumpets from Admiral Mountbatten's headquarters. In fact, since the Ledo road is practicable only in the dry season, the air link between Assam and Chungking will still be of greater value than the land route until Rangoon is recaptured. Forced out of Upper Burma, the Japanese seem likely to fight hard for Mandalay; and though British landings on the coast and islands in the Akyab area point presumably to an attempt to liberate as much as possible of Lower Burma before the May monsoon, there are no signs yet of a collapse of Japanese resistance. Nor should it be assumed that Manila will fall easily into General MacArthur's hands. The U.S. advance southwards from the Lingayen Gulf has met negligible opposition, and the important Clark Field air base has been secured; but between Clark Field and Manila lies the swampy estuary of the Pampanga River, in which the Japanese may have prepared defensive positions. Both in Burma and the Philippines the enemy's intention is probably to gain time, without adding to their defence commitments, while they consolidate their hold of the Chinese mainland. Having established the Changsha-Lang Son corridor to Indo-China, they are now carrying out a series of significant thrusts towards the coast. One, aimed at Kukong, is designed to clear the Hengyang-Canton railway; the other, directed against Sinchung, has for its immediate purpose the capture of the American airfields in Kiangsi. A more distant objective, we imagine, is the Canton-Yenping-Kinwha road, parallel with the coast. Are the Japanese taking steps merely against American landings, in the event of Formosa falling? Or is this the beginning of larger strategic moves based on the calculation that, even if Japan itself were invaded and conquered, the war could be continued in Manchukuo and China?

Which Way to a Settlement?

It is too soon to say what the chances are for a real and peaceful settlement in Greece. That a conference has been arranged is reason for hope; at the last moment a compromise was reached by which E.A.M. limited its delegation to three members—the number on which the Greek Government insisted—but secured the inclusion of M. Tsirimikos, the leader of E.L.D. besides the Communists, Siantos and Partsalides. In the discussions, E.A.M. is likely to demand an amnesty as the prelude to further agreement; if General Plastiras refuses to agree to this indispensable condition (which has been explicitly accepted as British policy by Mr. Churchill himself), it is difficult to see how there can be any settlement, since the only alternative to an amnesty is a renewed struggle to suppress the E.L.A.S. forces. The journey of Sir Walter Citrine would have been fruitless if he had not met M. Kalimiros and M. Theos, the leaders of the Greek Confederation of Workers, who are with E.L.A.S. in the mountains. To bring them back to Athens and attempt to reconcile them with the more reputable elements among the trade-unionists who enjoy the protection of General Plastiras was the right and courageous course. In the long run, the emergence of a free and genuine trade union movement, which can function without the danger that its leaders may be proscribed, may be the best guarantee of a democratic settlement. At the moment these negotiations have ended in the refusal of the E.A.M. leaders to accept trade union elections if they are to be held before a general amnesty. But at least contact has been re-established which may lead to agreement once the present atmosphere of hatred and suspicion can be overcome. It is this feeling of bitterness which has made the deepest impression on Sir Walter, and he has obviously tried to refrain from any act or word which would exacerbate it. He has spoken strongly about the atrocities; but to those who—like the Prime Minister—rashly denounced E.A.M. as a "gang of ruffians," he has replied that the non-Communists were a majority and many of the E.A.M. fighters were men of integrity and courage. The White Paper on E.A.M. excesses reveals an unpleasantly familiar story of Balkan civil war. Mr. Leeper significantly says that a Red Terror may easily lead to a White. He might have pointed out that E.A.M. violence is itself the product of the Metaxas Terror.

Subasic Remains

Under considerable pressure King Peter has accepted a compromise which permits Marshal Tito and Dr. Subasic to go ahead with the plans so nearly sabotaged by the crisis which his intrigue precipitated. Dr. Subasic, whom he recently dismissed with such *élan*, is to remain Prime Minister until he and his colleagues return to Yugoslavia to form a united government with the National Liberation Council. His cabinet is substantially the same as before, although he is authorised to add representatives of other parties if he wishes—a step he is hardly likely to take without consultation with Belgrade. King Peter, however, has been left one card, for he is to appoint the Regents. If he is sensible he will nominate men acceptable to Tito and Subasic; if he wishes to cap his diplomacy with a final indiscretion he will yield to the advice of his relatives and his reactionary Serb courtiers and select men who are hostile to the whole spirit of the Tito-Subasic agreement. Marshal Tito's speech last week-end revealed his anxiety for a reasonable settlement; throughout he has sought to avoid being pushed into a "revolutionary" position. If the change in Yugoslavia can be accomplished along constitutional lines, so much the better chance to escape the misery of internecine war. On the other hand, there is a limit to the patience his supporters will permit him to exercise. He spoke with some bitterness about those who spend their time arguing about portfolios whilst nearly half the partisan army needs boots.

International Collective Bargaining

On Tuesday, the Governing Body of the I.L.O. adopted the proposal to set up international industrial committees charged to consider and make recommendations about the affairs of particular industries and groups. An international Maritime Commission already exists; and before the war there was an international Agricultural Committee which is on the point of being revived. The big question this week was whether the new commissions were to be bipartite, like the Maritime Commission, or tripartite, so as to include government as well as employers' and workers' representatives. Sir John Forbes Watson, representing the British employers, opposed tripartite membership; the British Government, whilst not going so far as this, wanted to confine Government representatives to the role of observers, on the grounds that international should imitate the structure of national collective bargaining. The Governing Body did well to accept the tripartite model, for it is difficult to believe that bipartite bodies could do much in the less developed countries which stand in most need of international standards. Tripartite membership seems to be more helpful if the commissions are meant to be real preparatory bodies for committees which are to stand a reasonable chance of general acceptance by the Governments.

PARLIAMENT: Chamber in the Air

Wednesday, noon.

It is a pleasant change from the more sordid and humdrum controversies of the day when M.P.s devote themselves to passionate advocacy or abuse of the Gothic style in architecture, and argue the correct interpretation of Plato's conception of absolute beauty. True, not many of those who took part in Thursday's debate on the rebuilding of the House of Commons showed that they knew or cared much about the aesthetic aspect of the subject; but this did not deter them from expressing their views with heat and vigour. Rostron Duckworth moved an anti-Gothic and anti-Gilbert Scott amendment in a speech that was almost too finely wrought. The old Chamber, he said, did at least express something—the "robustness, exuberance and vulgarity" of the Victorian Age. Sir Giles's Chamber "will be third-hand Gothic in good taste—a prim, anæmic edition of the old Chamber."

Winterton, with whom the Prime Minister had fairly (and unnecessarily) lost his temper that morning, was simmering all day about it; and when, as chairman of the Select Committee which had accepted Gilbert Scott's design, he spoke on the constitutional issues involved in the control of the Palace of Westminster by several different authorities, he could not forbear to refer to the importance of standing up even to Prime Ministers "when they have been manifestly in the wrong, on a point affecting the rights of this House, and when they have lost their tempers." Lord Willoughby de Cresby, son of one of the authorities referred to by Winterton—the (hereditary) Lord Great Chamberlain—explained disarmingly that it was "almost a general rule" of his father's office that "any request is refused the first time it is made, and that when it is made the second time, and is a reasonable request, it is always agreed to."

The lobby of 21 against the Government consisted of (*a*) anti-Gothic æsthetes; (*b*) puritans who were against diverting *any* labour from general housing (though Sandys had explained that only 450 men, at most—out of 1¼ million—would be needed); (*c*) those who vote against Churchill automatically.

The new Chamber, Sandys said, will cost "rather over £1,250,000"; it seemed to Members quite a lot, so to speak, for one room.

Friday's debate on Civil Aviation ended with a cool-headed speech by Cripps, full of the need for "realism" and compromise: a model Coalition speech.

Greece has flared up twice this week—once on Tuesday evening, when Hogg, with only a few minutes to go, raised what Left-wing Members shouted angrily was an "obstructionist" and "bogus" point of order, and succeeded in preventing Acland from detailing most of the evidence that he claimed to have of the misleading of Parliament by Churchill and Eden; and again at question-time on Wednesday, when the Speaker rescued Dick Law (deputising for Eden) in the middle of an awkward supplementary by George Strauss. Both housing and coal came in for much attention at question-time; Gwilym Lloyd George got away rather more lightly than a less personally popular Minister might have, when he blamed the exceptional weather for maldistribution of coal, and said that coal was less easy to pool than milk.

Stokes, in a personal statement, referred to a severe attack made on him some weeks ago by Sinclair, who had, Stokes said, misquoted from a speech he had made to the R.A.F. in Cairo. Stokes had now received official R.A.F. confirmation from Cairo that he had said nothing objectionable; and in particular assured the House that he had never called it a "lunatic asylum." Sinclair, somewhat ungraciously, stalled the customary withdrawal; and there were Tory and general cheers when Buchanan asked the Speaker if he couldn't make Ministers do things decently.

Pontifex Minor

THE LITTLE CLIQUE

An open letter to Mr. Quintin Hogg, M.P.

Dear Quintin Hogg,

It was gross flattery on your part to attribute to a "little clique" the honour of leading the nation-wide movement that has so usefully influenced the Government's policy in Greece. But I fear that no one will be deceived into thinking that *The Times*, *Manchester Guardian Daily Herald* (that oracle of intellectualism), *News Chronicle*, *Reynolds*, *New Statesman and Nation* and other papers which, on this issue, have throughout been in substantial agreement are really run by a little clique of—how did you put it in your speech in the House ?—"agitators, near-Communists and mere intellectuals." Much of the pressure came from conservative and Service opinion behind the scenes which thought our policy disastrous. More effective was the stand of Labour, which sent a representative deputation to the Premier to remind him that the vote of support at the Labour Party Conference was based on an assurance that he would seek peace in Greece, and that it was backed by the clearest intimation that another war of intervention would lead to the kind of Labour revolt that stopped Mr. Churchill's war against Russia in 1920. Powerful Trade Unionist leaders like Jack Tanner and Will Lawther were quite clear about this in messages printed in *Reynolds*. No, it won't do to call this an "intellectual" or "near-Communist" sentiment. It is something much more pervasive—something on which you put your finger in a more thoughtful passage in your speech.

You were perfectly right in saying that the British people "is not so much Left or Right, Conservative, Liberal or Socialist, but profoundly humanist." It is because the prospect of a war against a movement which has fought on our side and which admittedly controls the greater part of Greece is abhorrent to the British people, that so many English people, "Left and Right, Conservative, Liberal and Socialist" have combined to stand against it. The issue, as you well know, has little to do with intellectuals or Communists, but a great deal to do with the purpose and future of Britain. On this issue I know you feel as strongly as I do. We are both born and bred in this country, and both proud of many of its achievements, especially its lone stand against Nazi Germany when the rest of the world thought us finished. Until recently I also thought our record in Greece one of which to be proud. It was perhaps quixotic to abandon swift victory in Africa for a hopeless effort to fulfil our guarantee in Greece in 1941, but I thought Mr. Churchill right to make the attempt, and said so at the time.

This brings me to the crux. I did not need the war itself to tell me that Mr. Churchill was our proper national leader until Nazi Germany was defeated. But years of support for Mr. Churchill have not made me forget my business of independent criticism. This criticism has mainly turned on a single point. Mr. Churchill understands the nature of the Nazi regime, but he has never understood the Europe that is growing out of the ashes of Nazi tyranny. He is still haunted, as he was after the last war, by the Bolshevik bogy, though in the exigencies of war he was magnificently capable of making Britain the loyal ally of the Soviet Union. What he is loth to admit is that the resistance movements are the necessary basis for a revivified Europe. Eventually he recognised the facts in France and Yugoslavia. It is much to his credit that he has done so, because the instincts of a descendant of Marlborough are to revive the picturesque futilities of eighteenth century Courts, and to assume that the well-to-do, whom our upper classes have usually visited on the Continent, could be reinstated in their positions of power and affluence. That, he now knows, is throughout most of Europe impossible, because it is mainly the well-to-do who have collaborated with the Germans. Mr. Churchill has unfortunately not so far been equally realistic in Italy or in Greece, which he regards as particularly British spheres of influence.

At the Labour Party Conference Mr. Bevin, arriving hot foot from the War Cabinet, stated that British policy in Greece was strategic—which is sound enough if it means that we must share in the control of strategic points and not that we aim at excluding our Allies from the Dardanelles. If the Prime Minister and Mr. Eden had based their policy publicly as well as privately on this fact, we should have been spared the false propaganda that has emanated from Athens. The occasion could have been used to clarify the post-war position of Britain. The Left could have been reminded of its tendency to forget that its "humanism" is ineffective unless backed by an ultimate readiness to use force, and the Right could have been told bluntly that its ideological preference for the wrong side had sabotaged collective action and made the war inevitable. That would have led on to a realisation that we must not again allow the prejudices of our ruling class to lead us astray in Europe.

In point of fact my non-Communist contacts with E.A.M. (I happen to have no Communist ones) tell me that only about 20 per cent. of E.L.A.S. support is Communist, though the percentage of Communist leadership is of course much higher. But that is really irrelevant. Unless we are to repeat all our past mistakes, our ruling class must recognise that Britain has to collaborate with many unwashed, ill-fed, often ill-advised and sometimes violent people. That is the condition to which Germany has reduced Europe, and it is in the vital movements of popular resistance, and not in those who have contrived to keep washed and well-fed during the occupation that the future lies. If we had looked at the matter in this realistic way we should have begun, not with a long series of intrigues which roused the worst suspicions in Greece, and which led to a mutiny and the internment by the British of some 10,000 Greek hostages in Africa, but by making the fullest and friendliest approach to those who had fought on our side during the war.

That would have been the way to maintain the interests of Britain in the Mediterranean. In my view it would be wise to place the ports of Salonika and the Piræus under the joint control of the fleets of the United Nations. In any case we should have done well to seek the friendship of the coalition of progressive forces in Greece. That was what the E.A.M. leaders in the cabinet (whom Mr. Churchill recklessly called Communists when in fact only one out of ten was a Communist) expected of us when they joined the Papandreou Government, and that is what we shall have to come to unless we are prepared to impose a dictatorship of the Right in Greece until the time comes for the next revolution or civil war. It is the fear of returning to such a dictatorship, which the Greeks loathed more than they did the German occupation, that has made E.L.A.S. fight so resolutely against us. It is clear from Mr. Eden's speeches that this is not the result that he desires. But it is only by reversing the wheels in Greece and repudiating our present reactionary associates, that we shall be able to find a government broadly based on popular feeling in Greece and so break the vicious circle of Terror and Counter-Terror.

The Editor

THE COLLIERY OWNER'S UTOPIA

One thing that is perfectly plain about Mr. Robert Foot's plan for the coal industry is that he never for a moment considered that public ownership might possibly be the right remedy. Whenever he mentions nationalisation, he takes for granted that it is an evil to be avoided at any cost. To advocate public ownership is to bring "politics" into industrial affairs; and it is simply assumed that any such intrusion of "politics" is an evil. Yet Mr. Foot goes out of his way to express the view that the State did the right thing in nationalising the coal itself, so that "the industry has only one landlord to deal with instead of many thousands." We do not say that it follows, if nationalisation of coal is good, that nationalisation of mines is good too; but why, if "politics" has acted so beneficently in the one field, should it be regarded as axiomatic that its extension to the other involves disaster? Of course, the real answer is that Mr. Foot was brought in by the Mining Association as its champion not in order that he might discuss the merits of nationalisation, but, quite on the contrary, to devise a plan for saving the colliery owners from it. So far does he go in this respect, that he in effect rejects not merely State ownership, but any degree at all of State control over the industry's affairs. His plan is a plan for a gigantic private monopoly, entirely uncontrolled by the State, and so designed as to give the proposed Central Board of colliery owners absolute power. Every colliery undertaking is to bind itself without qualification to obey the orders of this Central Board, which is to eliminate all competition in terms of price and is to have the most drastic powers of control over every colliery undertaking. It is to be a pure owners' Board, with no public representative, no representative of the miners, and no State control over its doings. Indeed, it is to reduce the Coal Commission, the public body which now owns the coal itself on behalf of the community and is entrusted by the State with the power to bring about compulsory amalgamation, to a mere agent, of the owners' Board, without power to enforce any amalgamation except at the Board's request.

Many of the colliery owners will probably dislike this scheme nearly as much as we do. The owners as a body have shown themselves to be inspired by two clearly connected, but not identical, sentiments—individualism and hostility to State intervention. Mr. Foot is telling them bluntly that he cannot make the post-war world safe for them on these terms, and that they must give up one or the other of their cherished prejudices. In brief, he urges them to follow the current fashion of industry, and to give up their individualism in order to save their property rights. In return, he promises to preserve them a relic even of their individualism: he will protect them against compulsory amalgamation as well as against public ownership.

What, it is natural to ask, does all this purport to offer to the miners, to whom Mr. Foot goes out of his way to be most polite—not at all in the customary manner of the Mining Association? It offers them no share at all in control—no seats on the proposed Board, or anything of that kind. What Mr. Foot keeps on saying to the miners is that his scheme will give them high wages—high enough, in the case of the underground workers, to give them in each district the pride of place among the industrial workers—secure and continuous employment, and regular machinery of negotiation on the national, on the district, and on the pit level. His scheme will do this, he claims, and will at the same time assure "a reasonable return on the capital employed in the industry after allowing at all times for proper appropriation to be made for amortisation, for the depreciation of plant, and for development." How is it to achieve these ends? By giving the Coal Board complete monopoly powers. Mr. Foot is not asking the miners to accept partnership in his proposed owners' monopoly: the owners, very likely, would not stand for that. He is telling them that, if they want higher wages and better conditions, their best course is to back the owners in demanding complete powers to exploit the public.

Of course this is not how Mr. Foot states the case. There is a great deal in his report—mostly in somewhat vague terms—about the need for thorough technical reorganisation, in order to reduce the costs of mining, and also in still vaguer terms about squeezing out unnecessary middlemen's charges. We are asked to believe that the proposed owners' Board, given absolute power, will be able so to reduce costs as to give both owners and miners all they can want and still let the public have its coal cheap (though we note that the plan contemplates a possible levy on the price paid by the domestic consumers in order to subsidise exports). The Board is to be a capital-raising and capital-providing as well as a controlling body: it is to take a hand in raising the capital which will be needed by the separate colliery undertakings for improving their equipment and technique. It is to act as a sort of National Investment Board for the industry, without any taint of public control. Mr. Foot does not attempt to disguise his view that technically the coal industry has fallen badly behind; but he relies on the very people who have allowed this to happen to carry through the fundamental technical revolution which he regards as necessary and to do this without altering the industry's basic structure.

This Foot plan clearly will not do. Even a purely Tory Government would hardly venture to enthrone in the coal industry a complete and unqualified private monopoly, subject to no sort of public control. But if Mr. Foot's plan is rejected, is there any alternative, except some kind of public ownership—presumably in the form of a national public corporation, with strong regional units under it, and power to raise capital, under the State's aegis, for reorganisation and development? The smaller collieries could be allowed to go on as they are. The State could limit acquisition to collieries that are more than mere outcrop workings, but would have to take by-product works carried on in close connection with coal-getting as well as the collieries themselves. In order to cover difficult cases, the public corporation could be empowered to lease to combined concerns any collieries which it did not desire to work itself; and it should, of course, take over and reorganise marketing, including export, as well as coal-getting.

What are the objections to such a scheme? They are, first, the readily intelligible objections of property-owners to any interference with the "rights of property," no matter how badly such property may be mismanaged from the standpoint of public interest; and, secondly, the objections of those who hold, often with a quite sincere opinion, that State ownership means "bureaucracy." Has the Central Electricity Board meant "bureaucracy," with any evil implication? On the contrary, it has done a difficult job remarkably well.

Let us hope that Mr. Foot's plan is the colliery owners' last throw. For a generation, they have made a hopeless mess of the coal industry and have sabotaged every plan for its reorganisation except those parts of the Act of 1930 which gave them power to charge the public more without improving their methods. The country cannot afford to tinker with this problem any longer. Let us not forget that there is, officially, no presumption that the mines are to be handed back to the owners after the war. The Government announced in 1942 its decision "to assume full control over the operation of the mines and to organise the industry on the basis of national service *with the intention that the organisation now to be established will continue pending a final decision by Parliament on the future of the industry.*" Even if the first part of this decision has never been fully implemented, the second part stands. Coal is in "politics" up to the neck; and not all Mr. Foot's colliery owners can pull it out of the public view into the private sphere, or reconstitute it as a monopolist's paradise.

THE ARMISTICE IN FINLAND

[FROM OUR MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT.]

ARRIVING at Helsinki after passing through battle-scarred Leningrad, one feels a certain sense of injustice; this capital of a defeated country seems at first sight not to have suffered at all from the war. Apart from the port and the immediate vicinity, which was bombed during what the Finns call the "Peace Offensive" of March, there is no damage to be seen. Glass was plentiful and shattered windows were quickly replaced. The streets are filled with well-dressed women and with young men in civilian clothes, for the army is now reduced to the peacetime basis of 39,000. There are few war cripples about. Though no official figures are published, Finnish casualties seem to have been relatively light. The shops are a bit short on clothing, but still stock many of what we should call luxury goods. Restaurants, where you can have moderately priced meals on coupons or expensive ones without, are crowded. So are cinemas, which have continued to show American films throughout the war, and which were patronised furtively by German troops. Young Finns are discovering the delights of dance halls, which are now licensed for the first time since the beginning of the "Winter War." There is a great deal of motor traffic which runs on gas generators. But if petrol is short, electricity isn't, and at night the city blazes with light, for there is no blackout and no curfew. How different it is from Moscow, lit only spasmodically by rockets of victory salutes!

Though Finland has had three years of war, and though she has lost what is estimated to be 10 to 12 per cent. of her national wealth, taking the country on a 1938 basis, her industry is completely intact, and what destruction there was is in territory ceded to the Soviet Union. There is, of course, almost complete destruction in sparsely inhabited areas to the North, where the retreating Germans spared time to burn every village, even lonely settlements miles off the main roads. This "vandalism" seems to have surprised and pained many Finns, who had not expected the usual German technique would be applied to them. More intelligent and progressive-minded persons seem to realise that the country has escaped very lightly, and that the Soviet Union has shown great forbearance towards it.

The present situation is curious. The Finns are supposed to be fighting the Germans in the North—Finnish papers incidentally say very little about this—but Finland has not declared war on Germany. Questioned about this anomaly, Premier Paasikivi merely said: "It is of no importance," adding jovially, "declarations of war are out of date nowadays." But the Inter-Allied Control Commission is by no means satisfied with this and other points. Paasikivi's contention, when interviewed by the Anglo-American Press, was that it will take time for Finland to adapt herself to the new conditions—meaning thereby that anti-Russian and to a lesser extent pro-German sentiment had been very strong for a long time—but that in the main the Finnish people have fully realised the necessity of establishing good relations with Russia.

To what extent are the armistice terms being carried out? Orlov, political officer of the Control Commission, said quite satisfactorily in some points, much less in others. Apart from the letter of the armistice terms there is also the spirit of general co-operation with the Allies involved. The Allies are not in any sense policing the country. They are leaving it to the Finnish Government to decide whether or not out-and-out collaborators like Ryti and Tanner should or should not remain in the high places they now hold. (Ryti returned to the Presidency of the Bank of Finland—"Ryti is a very clever financier," said one minister apologetically; Tanner is still leader of the Social Democratic Party, though a Party split seems imminent.) But the manner in which the problem of the collaborators will be handled by the Finns themselves is certainly bound to reflect on the future of Russo-Finnish relations. As Paasikivi pointed out, there is no law in the Finnish constitution providing for the punishment of statesmen who have carried out a Government policy which later proved to be mistaken. Matters, of course, are complicated by the fact that President Mannerheim, "the Grand Old Man of Finland," could very easily be classed as a war culprit.

While the Inter-Allied Control Commission has refrained from specifically raising the question of war culprits, the Commission has used its fullest legal rights to press for the dissolution of the pro-Fascist organisations. While Schutzcorps and other societies have been dissolved, anti-Allied and pro-Fascist opposition has crystallised in the organisation called Comrades in Arms. This Association, which is estimated by competent judges to have more than 400,000 members, resembles the former German *Stahlhelm* and the French *Croix de Feu* in that it uses the same demagogic trick of identifying itself with and promoting the interests of the ex-servicemen. In the opinion of the Control Commission many of the leaders of this movement are Fascists, though most of the rank and file are merely carried away by its patriotic slogans, "Good Works" and general sentimental appeal. This organisation is considered to be the backbone of the election machinery of reactionary forces.

The interesting feature of reactionary sentiment in Finland is the deeply ingrained idea of inevitable war between Britain and the U.S.A. on the one hand and Russia on the other, as a result whereof Finland will get her revenge. Not that such sentiments are by any means encouraged by the British on the spot. Never have I seen an Anglo-Russian team work together more harmoniously and satisfactorily than the Allied Control Commission in Helsinki. In the view of competent observers, the majority of the Finnish people, especially peasants and industrial workers, are of necessity establishing good relations with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the Finns are, as somebody has said, obstinate and pigheaded, and the Government, even if anxious to carry out the armistice terms as strictly as it should, would still be hampered by a variety of influences, for there has been nothing even remotely resembling a purge in the police or the civil service. German and Hungarian citizens are now interned, but the Germans who during the last days of the armistice managed to acquire Finnish citizenship are still at large. While few arrests have been made—only about thirty-five of a much longer list submitted to the Finns by the Russians—a large number of people imprisoned for pro-Allied sympathies have been released, including six Members of Parliament who served a term of three years, and Johan Helo, now Minister of Finance.

On the whole, one might say the situation in Finland, while being highly intricate, is by no means "chaotic"—to use Churchill's term. Lines are fairly clear-cut. Obviously the Finns have been taught for twenty-five years or more to hate the Russians. Now when they were completely at Russia's mercy (and didn't Russia and especially Leningrad feel bitter about the Finns!) they found Russia could be lenient and generous in her policy to the defeated enemy. They were surprised, some pleasantly, while others were inclined to regard it as a sign of the weakness of Russia's international position. Like the London Polish Government they still hope for a conflict among Russia and the Allies and therefore can't quite make up their minds to accept the idea that Finland must henceforth live in amity with Russia. The question is to what extent this attitude will still exist in the country generally at the time of the general election.

Ryti, Tanner and their like, who kept Finland in the war for an extra six months, will exert their influence to see a predominantly anti-Russian Sejm returned in order to perpetuate the present anomaly wherein the anti-Russian Parliament which was elected in 1939 exists with "co-operationist" Government. But Co-operationist parties, though they haven't had time to organise themselves as long as the pro-Fascists, are having an increasingly large following, if only because there is among the Finnish people a great fund of common-horse sense. There are numerous other election issues than relations with the U.S.S.R. One major problem will be the settlement of 400,000 Karelian and other evacuees from the countries ceded to the Soviet Union, and the best means of raising funds for this settlement. Among the proposals are slicing of larger farms, to which the Swedish-speaking part of Finland is particularly opposed, capital levy, etc. On the Left greater measures of socialisation are advocated. Another issue is the removal of "war culprits" from the responsible jobs or even their indictment.

What Finland seriously lacks is political education. Though the Germans have left few happy memories in Finland (their attitude to women was particularly objectionable) they refrained from major outrages, and Finland knows little and believes still less of what Germans did elsewhere. American films were shown throughout the war, but only films of entertainment. Only now are Soviet and British films coming in—mostly in driblets, though Coward's "In Which We Serve" has already had tremendous effect among those who have seen it. Small quantities of British books, papers and magazines reach Finland thanks to the efforts of our authorities in Sweden, but many of these publications are little more than "leftovers" from what the Swedes didn't want. Since English is the widely read language in Finland, here is a first-class opportunity of explaining to the Finns not only Britain but also British-Soviet relations, about which there still seem to be many misconceptions.

Altogether one has the impression that most Finns would welcome the opportunity to become useful members of a better Europe, but that their minds are still full of an accumulation of old rubbish. Only, unlike probably most Germans, they are willing to learn if they are given the opportunity. Here is a case where the M.o.I., for example, could do a first-class and full-time job. Not just a sideline, because Finland is something of a test case for our ability to eradicate past errors among Hitler's satellites.

A LONDON DIARY

I KNOW few more awkward problems than that of war criminals. Mr. Pell speaks for millions when he says that Nazis who have tortured and murdered Germans are just as criminal as those whose victims have been Poles or Frenchmen or Russians. A right principle we should stick to. He also says that Hitler and his gang and all the S.S. leaders and Gestapo thugs, amounting perhaps to hundreds of thousands, should be executed. How? That is the point. If they are killed in the war or by Germans we shall all be glad. If not, the problem of killing thousands in cold blood, whether it is called punishment or justice, is so disgusting that I doubt very much if it can be done. I am not surprised that the Foreign Office boggles, though I think it should make up its mind and not force Sir Cecil Hurst into resigning by simply not answering his letters for many months together. The best formula for Hitler and the leading Nazis might be "shot while attempting to escape." The familiar Nazi fiction would be less unpleasant than a public trial. Mr. Pell believes that Hitler and company have a blackmailing hold over the Allies. I expect he is right, and that Michael Foot was prophetic in the *Trial of Mussolini*. The Foreign Office and State Department would probably hate to see published all the correspondence between Chamberlain and other British high-ups and the leading Nazis. But I can't think that is the real reason for indecision. It comes from a long experience of national relations, and Mr. Churchill summed it up when he wrote, in one of the best phrases he ever coined, that "the grass grows quickly over the battlefield, but over the scaffold, never."

* * *

Ernest Bevin spoke for many of us when he pointed out that the tragedy of Elizabeth Maude Jones, under sentence of death for the taxi-driver murder, began with the frustration that has its roots in unemployment. As a small girl, intelligent and much liked by her teachers, this woman won a high school scholarship which she could not take up because her father was on the dole and could not buy the necessary books. She was by nature an exhibitionist, and, thwarted of her legitimate ambitions, she became the most terrible kind of exhibitionist. A dispassionate view of crime always divides responsibility between criminal and society. Obviously the problem goes deeper than that of providing proper maintenance scholarships. A L.C.C. mental specialist has just revealed that there are some hundreds of thousands of children growing up to-day without any of the home environment through which most of us learn that love is good and destructiveness is evil; many of them are actually becoming "satanie," preferring evil to good. That happened in Germany after the last war, and such children will be common throughout Europe after this one. The "re-education of Germany" is only part of a vast problem that involves Britain and all the nations whose basic civilisation has been challenged.

* * *

A Frenchman, whose opinion I respect, said to me this week: "The Americans seem to have made up their minds last August that the European War was over, bar the shouting. Anyway, troops and shipping which were expected in France were diverted to the Pacific. It was a risky decision. Of course, if Stalin's offensive ends the war that is all right, but if the fighting is prolonged a nasty situation for the Allies may develop in France. I do not think you or the Americans realise how bitter some French people are and how much the Germans are banking on the political effects of economic misery. They plan a 'Sixth Column' which would explode, under German orders, in liberated countries when the Allied offensive begins. That might happen if the political and economic strain is not eased." An extreme view? Perhaps. But there is little doubt of the activities in France and Belgium of Fascist bodies, camouflaged often as "Leftist"; and, even now, there is a risk of trouble unless Washington and London put more energy into rehabilitation work. It is all very well for de Gaulle to urge France to be patient. French rolling stock capable of operation has fallen to less than half the quantity needed for food distribution on a minimum subsistence level. French coal mines are paralysed because the pit-prop areas round Bordeaux are still in German hands. The F.F.I. units in these areas are deplorably short of everything. Shipments of goods promised by the Combined Supply Board have not materialised, and while French babies and old people are dying of cold in Paris, steam-heated offices for American staffs, and the revelation that 18,000 U.S. Army deserters are running in France a gigantic Black Market, are leading to intense anti-American feeling.

* * *

I am glad to see growing opposition to the Requisitioned Land and War Works Bill. The various Service Departments have appropriated for their special purposes large areas of England. Aerodromes, searchlight sites and ack-ack batteries have been dumped broadcast upon the unprotesting surface of the land; fields have been withdrawn from cultivation; meadows have disappeared under sheets of concrete, commons have been covered with huts, footpaths closed or diverted, while immense training areas have been ringed with barbed wire. Some of these areas are notable for their beauty (Studland, for example, and Tyneham and the Downs south of Amberley). The question is, what is to be done with these areas at the end of the war? The Bill places all land requisitioned by a Department during the war at the disposal of a War Works Commission responsible to the Treasury. The Commissioners will have power to retain requisitioned land in perpetuity or to determine whether it is to be sold or restored to its former owner. The argument for retention is, of course, the cost of clearing away the debris of the war. If the Commission think the cost too high—and it is no easy matter to break up and remove a concrete runway—the fences and enclosures will remain. In effect, then, many commons and open spaces will be bought outright by the Commissioners and left as they are, because to buy outright will be cheaper than to restore. Thus, the State, which once failed to prevent the private enclosure of common land, is now given the power to make fresh enclosures in its own right. There are two particularly disquieting features of the proposed measure. First, the secrecy which it envisages. Land can apparently be acquired without any right of objection being given to interested persons or Local Authorities; rights of way can be extinguished by secret or semi-secret methods. Secondly, no mention is made in the proposals of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning which, it might have been supposed, would be allowed to hold at least a watching brief on behalf of amenities. The Commons and Footpaths Society is, as usual, first in the field with a forcible memorandum, and I understand that a large number of amendments have been put down for the second reading of the Bill in Parliament. There has been a rumour that the Bill may be withdrawn. A care for beauty, a jealous vigilance for the rights of the public—these things are not so common as they used to be. Thank goodness somebody can still be found to make a row about them.

* * *

Many delegates are already arriving for the World Trade Union Conference which meets next week in London. Amongst them I notice that the French delegates are here, having visited Moscow first; that delegates from Mexico, South America, India and Gambia have arrived; that the C.I.O. will be present, but not the A.F.L.O. With U.S., Russian, and Latin American Trade Unionists all sending strong delegations, the meetings will be a remarkable opportunity to ensure that working-class co-operation after this war shall prove more durable and effective than the Amsterdam International.

* * *

It was very cold comfort for those who spent part of their week-end lining up for a few pounds of coal to be told that we have done very well to get as far as the sixth winter of war without a serious domestic shortage. London, I suppose, was a colder place than most of the towns which have been reporting new low temperature records, because the north wind blew in through all sorts of cracks and crannies which even the best emergency repairs cannot close. One man I know was reduced to tearing up the floorboards in an unused room; another spent Saturday going from cinema to cinema (he found the small news-theatres the most comfortable). At one cinema an applicant for tickets at the box office asked for the warmest seat they had, whatever the price. A friend who went along to fetch his ration with a bath chair found that many of his companions in the queue were old people. They said they couldn't afford to store coal in the summer months on old-age pensions. Having got their coal they weren't strong enough to carry it, and my friend spent an hour ferrying bags and baskets home for them. He suggested that this was a job that could have been done without too much bother by A.R.P. lorries, as well as by the soldiers made available here and there.

I woke up to find a bat in the bedroom. Why, I asked myself, as I watched its completely silent flight from beam to beam, does having bats in the belfry mean scattiness and has the reason anything to do with the repugnance I feel to catching that bat in my hands and putting it out of the window ? I should not feel the same about a bird, and I am sure the repulsion has nothing to do with the vermin that are said to thrive on bats (and which would not thrive on me). Nor has it anything to do with stories of Dracula and bloodsucking vampires. In the end I got up, threw a dressing-gown over the bat as it clung to the wall and carried it out into the snow. I opened the dressing-gown on the ground and was astonished to see what a tiny, appealing slip of a creature it was, sitting (if you can use the word of so strange an anatomy) on the newly-fallen snow, with its big ears up, its transparent wings stretched out and its big eyes staring blindly into the cold morning sunshine. The next second it was gone. An exquisite little beast !

CRITIC

THE CAUTIOUS OPTIMIST

" There is no undue optimism in this house. We are not interested in the possibilities of lightning victory. They do not exist."

There is no wishful thinking in Britain,
  No rose-tinted glasses are worn,
No victory marches are written,
  War prophets are looked on with scorn.
New trials are not underrated,
  There are no super-optimists here,
But the end, as of old, is awaited
  With temperate cheer.

No chickens in Britain are counted,
  Complacency does not exist,
High hurdles must still be surmounted,
  War risks, though diminished, persist.
Peace Plans are not so far perfected,
  As we mass for the final break-through,
And victory is not expected
  Before it is due.

Predictions are rightly mistrusted,
  We are not ahead of the clock,
The Stock Exchange must be adjusted
  For meeting the ultimate shock.
Relief is not free from confusion,
  There are problems with which we must cope
(Divorced from all pleasing illusion
  Fair forecasts are out of our scope),
But we wait the predestined conclusion
  With confident hope.

From neutral observers we differ,
  We reckon no short cut to peace,
Our upper lip never was stiffer,
  Our wartime exertions increase.
We shun premature jubilation,
  Emotions are strictly controlled,
We will not predict the duration
  Until we are told.

SAGITTARIUS

THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA—II.

[In his previous article the author, who is War Correspondent of *Time* and *Life*, dealt with the degree of popular support for Marshal Tito, the role of Mihailovich, the influence of the Communists in Yugoslav Resistance and the economic programme of the Liberation Front.]

ALL Nedich's administration has been dismissed in Serbia, and the Partisans are much criticised for administrative inefficiency in the cities. They are picking men from among Nedich's former officials and their own ranks, and must face a hard choice between an unreliable old city hand and a non-expert woodsman—not to speak of a number of Belgrade collaborationists who on October 22nd pinned ostentatious Red Stars on their chests. The Partisan civil administration is composed of a pyramid of Anti-Fascist Councils, the base being the Village Councils, and the top, the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia. Between the two stand the District, Regional and Land (State) Councils. Only the Village Councils are to be elected by direct popular vote. All other Councils consist of delegates from immediately lower Councils. Each Council elects from its midst its Executive Committee. The National Committee of Yugoslavia, presided over by Marshal Tito, is the national executive organ of the Yugoslav Anti-Fascist Council, the supreme legislative body of liberated Yugoslavia. All these organs of authority are considered provisional, until a freely elected Constituent Assembly after the war shall have decided on the final form of government.

The secret of Marshal Tito's military success is to be found in his statesmanship. From the beginning, in 1941, he appeared as a national rather than a Communist leader ; as a Yugoslav rather than a Croat champion. From the beginning he appealed not only to all Yugoslav political parties, but to all Yugoslav nationalities, to " gang up " against the invaders. He has been offering the only possible solution for Yugoslavia's long-standing nationality problem—union in federalism. Tito will repeat, again and again, how during his conversations with Mihailovich in 1941 he split with him on two issues : the strategy of relentless fighting and the programme of national equality. He was destined to win against Mihailovich, first, because he appealed to the heroic instinct of the Yugoslav peoples by preaching constant fighting regardless of odds ; second, because he rejected the obsolete, pernicious idea of Serbian supremacy, and stood for absolute equality of Yugoslav nationalities. Thus, from the very beginning, he drew upon the militant man-power of every one of the Yugoslav nationalities, while Mihailovich remained restricted to the shallow human reservoir of the chauvinistic fraction of the Serbs.

The outstanding anomaly of the present-day situation is that Marshal Tito's National Committee and Anti-Fascist Council exercise sovereign power in the country, and King Peter and his Government outside the country. The Partisans enjoy a healthy physical existence of their own but no rights in international society. They point out that the Constitution of 1931, on which the King and his Government base their authority, was decreed unilaterally by the late King Alexander after he, in 1929, abolished the Constitution of 1921 and assumed dictatorial powers. By the Royal Constitution of 1931 monarchy is the sole source of power, and it is this Constitution, as well as the monarch's position, that the National Liberation Front desires to submit to the popular vote.

In this fourth winter of hostilities, the conditions in Yugoslavia are appalling beyond imagination. In certain parts of Bosnia and Lika one can walk for days without meeting man or beast, and grass grows where once there were villages. Out of Yugoslavia's 15 million people, nearly 2 million have perished in battles, massacres, concentration camps, from disease, starvation and poverty—proportionately the highest toll of life suffered by any nation in this war. National Liberation authorities claim nearly 200,000 dead Partisan soldiers alone. It is estimated that, this winter, one-half of the Yugoslav population go barefoot. Even in Belgrade many of Tito's soldiers can still be seen marching without boots or without overcoats in sub-zero weather. On mountain roads half-clad peasant women hide in bushes at the appearance of a stranger. And less than 20 per cent. of the arable area of Yugoslavia was sown last autumn. Thousands more Yugoslavs will pay with their lives if a united Government, recognized by the Allies and entitled to U.N.R.R.A. and Lend-Lease help, is not formed immediately.

In the past, the disagreement between U.N.R.R.A. and Marshal Tito's National Committee seemed to be that U.N.R.R.A. insisted on distribution of relief in Yugoslavia through its own organs, while the National Committee refused relief unless distributed through the National Liberation authorities. Apparently U.N.R.R.A. suspected the Partisans of eventually using relief for political purposes, while the Partisans were afraid of U.N.R.R.A.'s use of relief to weaken the authority of the National Liberation regime. According to Mr. Lehmann's latest declaration, this point seems to have been cleared up : relief will be distributed through native authorities, with U.N.R.R.A. observers on the spot.

If Lend-Lease and U.N.R.R.A. are to send any help to Yugoslavia, it should be clothing, footwear and lorries first of all, and in great quantities. A damaged Allied parachute to-day takes the place of gold in Yugoslavia—people will give you anything they have for a strip of it. All the textile and leather industries of Serbia, working full speed, cannot help greatly the clothing and footwear situation. Belgrade has no heating this winter, and the rate of frostbite and rheumatic fever among children is rising alarmingly. Transport in Yugoslavia has been hit by everybody in this war—by Germans, Partisans and Allied bombers. Railways and roads are being repaired, but the enemy took away practically all the locomotives, and there are very few lorries for the army and none for civilian needs. Livestock—cattle, horses, mules—has been destroyed or plundered by the enemy up to 80 per cent., especially in the traditional livestock regions of Slovenia and Bosnia, so that people lack even the most primitive form of transport —ox-carts. There are 100,000 tons of surplus wheat rotting in Voyvodina, while in Montenegro, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina people are dying of famine by the thousands for lack of transport. Serbia has some food to help other provinces, but no means of moving it. The Kostolatz mine, near Belgrade, could feed the entire city with fuel, but there is no way of bringing the coal in. Many peasants could rebuild their homes, but have no ox-carts to get the timber to the spot. Wounded Partisan soldiers can be met dragging themselves on foot from the front to the rear, because often there is no vehicle to carry them to the hospital.

There is little talk in Yugoslavia about confederations with other Balkan or Central European countries : all such schemes seem to be postponed " until Berlin falls." In the meanwhile, the National Liberation Front is working on the creation of the largest and strongest possible federal Yugoslavia. Last November official Bulgarian spokesmen stated in Belgrade the right of the people of Bulgarian Macedonia to join Yugoslav Macedonia within Yugoslavia. Very likely the National Liberation Government will claim Pechuj, lost to Hungary after the last war. And it is certain that the entire National Liberation Front will throw every ounce of its strength into getting the Yugoslav-inhabited provinces of Istria and Gorizia, together with Trieste, Zara and the Croatian islands from Italy. Even Albania might enter Yugoslavia as a federal unit. The indications, at present, are that a federal Yugoslavia, thus enlarged, would then enter into military alliances with anti-Fascist Bulgaria, Rumania and Czechoslovakia—a sort of enlarged anti-Fascist Little Entente—subject, of course, to a Moscow—London agreement.

Yugoslavia is an ideal testing ground for a permanent Russo-Anglo-American accord. Although the National Liberation Front often leans on Moscow's guidance, it has proved very amenable to British suggestions. I can quote the firm, openly expressed belief of the highest National Liberation spokesmen that without a lasting Yugoslav agreement with America and Britain, especially the latter, the international security of Yugoslavia and her internal peace cannot be fully guaranteed.

STOYAN PRIBICHEVICH

THE SOLDIER'S FREEDOM

The apparent determination of the Secretary of State for War to prevent the Army thinking or speaking has taken a new and disquieting turn. Recently an Army Council Instruction—A.C.I. 527, of 1944—was issued:

> 1. All ranks will be warned not to permit their names or their opinions on Service matters to be published for political purposes, nor to add their signatures or to permit their names to be added to public petitions, circulars and appeals dealing with political matters.
>
> 2. An officer or soldier who permits his name so to be used may be held to have contravened one of the following regulations:—*King's Regulations*, 1940, paras. 530, 541, or 547.

What would any soldier, or indeed officer, think if he received this "warning"? He would surely assume that, if he did any of the various things covered by paragraph 1, he would definitely be guilty of an offence against one or more of the "K.Rs." cited, and would be liable to court-martial.

The banned actions are pretty wide and varied—difficult to define with confidence. To begin with, the soldier must not permit his opinion on Service matters to be published for political purposes. What are Service matters? Leave? Pay? Dependants' allowances? Compassionate posting? Lack of reception for troops returning from Burma? Hospital treatment? Demobilisation and post-war problems? Forces Parliaments? Use of British troops in Greece? I suppose the answer is "Yes" in every case. That is, the soldier must not tell the public his views on such vital topics, unless they are purely "non-political"! In such a context "non-political" obviously means "non-critical."

That is bad enough; but more follows. The soldier must not sign, nor let his name be added to, any public petition, circular, or appeal dealing with political matters! So he certainly could not, on the face of it, sign a petition for the return of Mosley or Ramsay to internment, in a war which he believes is against Fascism; nor could he safely sign a petition asking for any improvement in his conditions, pay, leave, or demobilisation, or even for the supply of the *Daily Worker*.

Now, if this method of gagging the troops were lawful, *i.e.*, if the "K.Rs." cited did really forbid all these things, it would be an outrageous state of the law. But the truth is, the "K.R.s" do nothing of the kind.

"K.R." 530 deals exclusively with the redress of individual grievances through "official channels," and could not possibly have any bearing on such things as the publication of names for political purposes, or the signature of petitions dealing with political matters. "K.R." 541 covers "Political and Non-Military Activities." It forbids soldiers to "take any active part in the affairs of any political organisation or party, either by acting as a member of a candidate's election committee, or by speaking in public or publishing or distributing literature in furtherance of the political purposes of any such organisation or party, or in any other manner." It thus fails to cover more than a small proportion of the activities against which the soldier is warned by the A.C.I. The remaining "K.R.," No. 547, is still more remote from the A.C.I. It is headed "Communication of Military Information," and deals mainly with publication, particularly in the press, of military information.

We are thus confronted with an A.C.I. "warning" which has no legal justification for its assertions. In answer to a question I asked in the House, Grigg denied that the A.C.I. asserted that the actions mentioned were offences, and said that the question whether in a particular instance there had been a contravention of *King's Regulations* would be one for determination by the responsible military authority. He argued, further, that the A.C.I. "is not in the least a threat." The House of Lords has ruled that a warning which you have power to enforce by visiting unpleasant consequences on the person warned amounts to at threat.) Surely to misrepresent the law in order to gag the legitimate expression of opinion, and then to defend it by pretending that the threat of prosecution is not designed to suggest to the general mass of troops, who have not their solicitors with them, that the things forbidden are subject to prosecution, is, even for Grigg, what American financial slang calls "a new low."

D. N. Pritt

KEEP HIM MOVING

There's something in a lying horse (to Bowdlerise Wordsworth) that draws the London crowd. Johnson and I joined the growing knot of people who, hands in pockets, stood around the prostrate animal wondering if he would get up again or if someone would have to take him out of the shafts first. We knew nothing of horses, prone or upright; essentially, Johnson was a steeplejack and I a solicitor. But as War Reserve Constables we carried a uniform that betokened action and resource: the expectation that we should do something was all that held the crowd together.

"'E's got colic," said the stout, aged carman when I began asking official questions. "'Ad it before, 'e 'as. Lies down and nothink won't shift 'im till 'e's ready to git up."

It couldn't stay there, we pointed out, in the middle of a main thoroughfare. "O.K. guv'nor, you shift 'im," said the stout carman, "I can't do nothink. I've 'ad this before." Did his employer retain a veterinary surgeon? No, not 'im. If we sent for a vet, the owner of the horse would have to pay his fee. O.K., do 'im good. So Johnson went off to 'phone for a veterinary surgeon and a horse-slaughterer, while I, leaning over the panting animal, made esoteric little noises and fumbled inexpertly with the harness to fill in the time.

A huge railway van approached, equipped with two vast horses and a tiny, wizened Cockney carman. He pulled in his reins and stood up on his foot-brake. "Everything O.K., guv?" he shouted. I hate to think why, but he guessed the answer; clambered down, and approached with a Lilliputian swagger.

"Colic?" he said when we told him. "O.K. Soon get 'im up. Anyone got any rope? 'Ere" (he said to an elderly gentleman who had just arrived and taken up his position), "chuck me them two bits o' rope orf o' that tailboard. Thankin' yew. Nah we shan't be long."

"Mind if I cut this, mate?" he asked the stout carman, slicing the rope in half without waiting for an answer. As he busily made slip-knots in each piece of rope he glanced at his unresourceful colleague and said, kindly, "You keep away a bit, mate—you might get 'urt." He stooped and tied the horse's forefeet together firmly, and then did the same with the hind feet, leaving in each case a length of rope to lay hold of. And he uncoupled the harness.

Johnson came back. The veterinary surgeon and the slaughterer were both out, he said, but messages were being sent to them and they wouldn't be long.

"Nah then, guv," said the railway carman to me, "cop 'old o' that rope's end, I'll take this one, and we'll pull 'im over on 'is back. Then right over to 'is other side. Got it? Righto. 'Eave-o, and up she comes."

And up she came.

But no sooner did the horse find his hooves touching ground again than he began to struggle. And the wizened little carman began tearing at the knots. "Quick, guv, quick," he shouted, "'e's going to get up. Quick with them ropes." Together we tore them off, and the horse plunged and scrambled to its feet. "There y'are, mate," said the expert, "that's all you 'ave to do with colic—turn 'em over. But keep 'im movin'. For Gawd's sake don't let 'im stop movin'. Don't try and 'arness 'im up again. If you let 'im stand still 'arf a minute 'e'll lie down again. Walk 'im 'ome." This was all very well, but Johnson and I were policemen as well as spectators, and policemen have to put in reports about incidents like this, especially if they have involved the summoning of professional services that will have to be paid for. The vet was on his way, and even if he did nothing when he arrived he would have to be paid something. The slaughterer was different—he would always come on the off-chance of getting a carcase to sell.

"Cheerio, guv," said the railway carman, hopping back to his pantechnicon. "Keep 'im movin'."

We thought we had better walk round the block in a little group, writing down the names, addresses, and so on as we went along. But the temptation to stop every now and then to write a word or two was irresistible (have you ever tried to write walking along?); and whenever we stopped, the horse's hindquarters began to subside slowly towards the ground. "Keep 'im movin'," would come a stentorian yell from the railway van, which was behind us for part of the way. And we would all get into motion again, Johnson with the horse, the carman and I alongside, two messenger boys with bicycles, a Polish sailor and a woman eating an apple. A car emerging from a side-turning held us up for perhaps 20 seconds, and the horse had practically sat down when Johnson and I, pushing and hauling with all dignity abandoned, managed to lumber it into movement again.

We gave this up. The stables were at Kennington, said the carman. Johnson would walk there with the horse and the carman, and I would look after the horseless van until it could be removed. So off they went, and the camp-followers contentedly melted away.

It must have been half an hour later that the veterinary surgeon arrived (the slaughterer having, in the meantime, encountered Johnson's little procession on the road and been sent disgruntled away). The vet was very nice about it. "It doesn't matter," he said. "You can't always help this sort of thing. And I'm on my way to another call. Kennington Road. Similar job, I think—horse down with colic."

It was hours later that I saw Johnson in the mess-room. The horse got held up at some traffic lights, he said, and down it went. A regular policeman came over, and decided to send for a vet. So Johnson got the names and addresses he wanted and came away.

"Where did this happen?" I asked him.

"Kennington Road," he said.

C. H. Rolph

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to C. Henderson.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

We did not want force to terrorise the other countries, but merely to impose our wishes and our ideas for peace on the rest of the world.—Report of Conservative Meeting in *Christchurch Times.*

"Throughout the day we have received telephone complaints that it would be in extremely bad taste for us to attempt, even in French, a reconstruction of the Old Bailey trial," said another B.B.C. official. *—Daily Mail.*

Picture calendars were given to the infant scholars (by Mrs. Rowell) and the senior girls received (from Mrs. Hughes) calendars which they themselves had made during school hours.—Report in *Cheshire Observer.*

Good housemaid required to take care of old furniture; other staff kept; . . . two in family. Advt. in *The Times.*

The war news became much too good for the stock markets yesterday.—City Notes in *News Chronicle.*

RADIO NOTES

Radio, though in many respects a simple medium, is oddly incalculable. The final impression made by a long and elaborate broadcast can be seriously upset by the unfortunate timbre of a single voice, or by two voices which sound alike, by a bad piece of panel work resulting in a thunderous gap that would be imperceptible on the stage or film, by a phrase of music faded half a second too late or too soon, by an infinitesimal falsity of tempo, or an unpredictable slackness in the atmosphere of the studio. The listener may not be—perhaps usually is not—consciously aware of what it is that has caused his dissatisfaction, yet—such is the strange nature of this medium—it is most likely to be something in itself quite small. Gross miscalculations are nowadays far more common on the stage and film than in radio. A liver attack, a creaking floor-board, an ill-typed script, a stuffy or frigid studio: these are only a few of the gremlins of broadcasting, magnified into giants by the inordinate sensitivity of the microphone. For that aertex object, in appearance so impersonal, so boot-faced, has in fact a malice all its own—as amateur speakers find, to their cost: not the voice alone, but the character of the speaker, and especially those features of it which he or she hoped to conceal—these the microphone picks up and throws into merciless relief.

To be a good broadcaster, then—whether at impersonating yourself or others—is an exercise in that form of sincerity which consists in showing yourself at your best. To achieve this—on the air as in life—entails, paradoxically, acting. Those who (on January 26th) heard Desmond MacCarthy tell the story of the first exhibition of Post-Impressionist pictures in 1910, will surely have been as delighted by the naturalness of this broadcast as by the excellent fun of the story. Mr. MacCarthy was Secretary of this famous exhibition and his account had that mixture of high spirits and integral human affection which distinguished the conversation of Charles Lamb. It was a virtuoso example of radio monologue—quite one of the very best I have ever heard—but, like all virtuoso performances, it gave us the speaker at his most natural by dint of a display of discreet acting from which no trick known even to Gladys Young or Carleton Hobbs (to name the highest authorities) was absent.

Desmond MacCarthy in the part of Desmond MacCarthy is an occurrence which does not always coincide with his broadcasts. Another speaker in possession of the technique of appearing natural is Desmond Shawe-Taylor, whose talk on Donizetti last Sunday was an absolute model. Virtuosity was neither required nor displayed, but one was persuaded to listen, and to agree, by enthusiasm in the control of a clear-thinking, sensitive mind. These Music Magazine programmes are, in their quiet way, among the most imaginatively handled broadcasts of the week. The editor, Alec Robertson, is a scholar who knows how to educate while entertaining. His method is preferable to that which consists in gate-crashing a variety programme with a reading of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*—a procedure which takes for granted that adult listeners respond to obtuse suggestion as young children to a second-rate conjurer. That this may in some cases be true does not detract from the insulting nature of the manoeuvre; an equivocal appeal to the lowest common denominator in any audience is flagitious and is apt to bring its own punishment in the form of steeply diminishing returns.

Recommendations:—On February 7th a distinguished French conductor, Paul Paray, will conduct the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. Paray has been called the Sir Henry Wood of France. From what I know of his work I should say that he was considerably less adventurous and catholic in temperament than Sir Henry, though as a conductor probably not inferior. The concert will include the César Franck Symphony and Ravel's Piano Concerto, the soloist in this latter being Yvonne Lefébure, a remarkable pianist already known to us here. If M. Paray can get as much out of the B.B.C. Orchestra as Charles Munch succeeded in getting, he will earn as much gratitude.

February 9th: *Julius Caesar*, in the Farjeon series. Godfrey Tearle (Mark Antony), Carleton Hobbs (Julius Caesar), Robert Speaight (Brutus), Joyce Redman (Calpurnia), are the stars in a production which, I hope, may wipe out desperate memories of the last broadcast performance of this play. The music has been composed by that clever young man, Antony Hopkins, who has already shown signs of becoming an expert at this sort of thing.

Edward Sackville West

NATIONALITY IN ART

How sensitive, how accomplished, how unpretentious, are the paintings by ten English artists now to be seen at Wildenstein's! None jostles his neighbours or protrudes an aggressive personality; and a visiting foreigner might applaud here a reflection of the good manners and gentleness that he had admired in English crowds and queues. On the other hand he might notice—and if from Central Europe would doubtless denounce—a certain lack of animation. These painters, it must be admitted, are decidedly domesticated, though none, I think, is over forty. (You remember George Moore's beastly description of Wilson Steer as "an improved cat.") Perhaps five years of meagre diet, and of isolation from the Southern sun, are partly responsible. But we may even welcome this mildness, remembering some of our painters who seek to startle and impress, pygmies vainly borrowing arms they cannot handle from the giants of the Continent.

Look first at Mary Kessell, whose name suggests some tincture of blood more quickly flowing than ours. She is evidently haunted by the atrocity that envelopes Europe—you have only to look at her drawings of refugees—and three of her paintings are entitled "And they shall go into the clefts of the rocks." But in these she has made music, so to speak, of her consternation by fading her work to the seductive dimness of time-worn frescoes, from which harmonious groups glimmer in front of spectral mountains. Even so did the great Renaissance painters turn to elegance the Massacre of the Innocents or the Agony in the Garden. Her purpose, I presume, has been not to excite our indignation (which, indeed, is suffering from a long excess of excitement), but to sublimate her own feelings by composing a dirge. And this dirge is beautiful. Though the strains seem to come from very far, sometimes indeed almost become inaudible, I find them moving. Having supped too full of horror, we respond more readily to a sigh that catches our imagination than to a scream that bares a fact.

The only other pictures in the show to have a topical bearing are Robin Darwin's *Sedgefield Racecourse in Wartime* and Frances MacDonald's *Building Mulberry*, both excellent records. Elsewhere we are reminded of the happiness to be found by the active eye in such peaceable sights as a dressing-table in sunlight, a mill-stream, a broken washstand, a dish of pears, children at a piano, a beach-path, the Red Lion Brewery and yachts bobbing in a sunny harbour—a quick sketch of which last, by Edward le Bas, has just the liveliness that his fellows have sacrificed to other virtues. (I should except Kenneth Rowntree, who has a delightful trick of noticing and making vivid the odd sights most of us are blind to.) Rodrigo Moynihan's three works I found specially interesting. They are beautifully painted—*Dennis Head* reminds me of Courbet—but the composition of *Port Hallow Beach* is painfully Victorian—or is this again a relic of Courbet who was often clumsy and haphazard in design? Robert Buhler and Derek Hill I almost always find sympathetic: their pleasure in painting is infectious, and Mr. Hill's pictures are the happiest he has yet shown. A portrait by Frances MacDonald is another picture not to miss; and indeed almost everything here is charming or thoughtful. The painters I have not named are Claude Rogers, K. E. Henderson and Gabriel White.

Little space is left to do more than commend the mixed show at the Lefevre, in which English painting displays a bolder front. The large interior with a figure by Duncan Grant, for instance, is more ambitious than anything at Wildenstein's. Mr. Grant can be as charming as any siren: look at the *Still Life* and the *Newhaven Landscape*; but he has not been "improved," and this picture, with its hard and even disagreeable passages, a certain lack of atmosphere, too, is powerful and impressive. My pick, from a good mixed bunch of pictures, would be the Spencer Gore of a garden.

Roger Marvell

THE MOVIES

"Les Otages" and "Prelude to War," at the Academy

"They Came to a City," Granada Circuit

"Guest in the House," at London Pavilion

How do they manage so easily? Once again, after an hour and a half of untainted pleasure at the Academy, I try to pin down the merits of the French school. Enjoyment, perhaps, should come first. The people who made *Les Otages* enjoy life, and their object has been to communicate enjoyment. They enjoy the humours and landscape of provincial life, they enjoy sitting down to table, they enjoy weddings and funerals, they enjoy middle-age, marriage, flirtation, disputes of every kind. They aren't ashamed of human nature, as we are. Then the French film—I am speaking in general—follows tradition. It is a natural development from the arts in which the French have excelled: acting, the novel, painting and music. To take the last two, since they are commonly ignored, we assume that French films will look and sound beautiful. *Les Otages* is not especially remarkable in this respect, but every shot has been composed with elegance (a misty river or a sunlit street ravishes the eye), and Milhaud's score is everywhere lively and tasteful.

This legacy of the arts induces a balanced style. Without it the director of *Les Otages*, Raymond Bernard, could hardly have matched comedy and heroism so perfectly as he has. The hostages of his story are five citizens of a tiny village on the Marne during the last war. Between the mayor and the local landowner there has been a feud of many years' standing. They dispute a right of way through a barn; their children get secretly engaged; it takes an invasion to make them sink their differences. When a German captain is murdered, they offer themselves with three others as hostages, expecting to be shot at dawn. Every moment of this situation is exuberant and the changes from fun to pathos are wonderfully easy. We experience every emotion in the chosen scale when the five men, in their Sunday best, heads high, but with a tendency, one after another, to step behind a convenient haystack, walk out to surrender themselves to their captors. The actors are of the reliable kind whose faces are familiar and whose names we forget: Larquey, Charpin, Saturnin Fabre.

Prelude to War, in the same programme, is the first of the O.W.I. series *Why We Fight*. Like the others, it uses newsreels brilliantly to outline a history of the present. No more vivid statement of the causes of the war, the parallel development of Fascism in Germany, Italy and Japan, has been made. My only criticism of this instalment is that Spain—a side-issue, but an important one—has been left out of the picture.

Then—this is an unusually lucky week—two films, one English and one American, that fail interestingly. *They Came to a City* is Mr. Priestley's political fantasy transferred from stage to screen. It gains little, if anything, from the fresh medium: the characters aren't quite interesting enough to sustain the lack of action, the city of the future has gloomy forecourts savouring of eternity, and in general the machinery of fantasy distracts rather than adds force to argument. Still, the idea, the irritant, is there; and now and again, usually in the person of the thwarted revolutionary, it sweeps the imagination forward. "We never behave decently, working together": that sums up notably the source of his dissatisfaction and the general theme. Good acting by the original cast. *Guest in the House* attempts a study of neurosis. Unfortunately, in the American fashion, a tricky subject has to be reduced to its ABC, and the situation has to be richly melodramatised (pounding seas, thunderstorms, jangling music, etc.). The result, something between thriller and clinical study, is at least unusual.

William Whitebait

Correspondence

FUTURE OF CANADA'S ECONOMY

SIR,—As a Canadian, and son of a Western prairie wheat farmer," I found your editorial comment on Ir. Hudson's recent visit to Canada most interesting. our analysis of the situation relative to the ecessity for reciprocal trade relations is correct. ut I suggest that you have not penetrated beyond the urface of the problems of British-Canadian post-war ade, or its application to the wider field of Common-ealth or World exchange of goods.

The most significant fact—a fact of which most ritishers are ignorant—is that within the short space f five years Canada has become an industrial, in ddition to an agricultural nation. Statistics reveal omething like a four-fold increase in industrial roduction during the war years. That is phenomenal, d revolutionary in Canadian occupational life. he increased agricultural production, of which you rite, has been achieved by mechanised farming and the face of a terrific drain of population from rural urban areas. (Note the loss of population by the ricultural Prairie Provinces, and the gains of ntario and British Columbia.) This process of dustrialisation must be considered as more than a mporary war-time expedient. It must be viewed the future trend of our Canadian economy. The sult of this trend will be that in the future, Canada ill be much less dependent on external trade for r supplies of manufactured goods. Yet without anadian dollars, how is Britain to buy Canadian ricultural produce ?

The fact is that Canada does not necessarily need ritish industry ; but Britain most desperately needs e primary production of the Commonwealth. The sults of a false economy which has nigh excluded but industrial life, and which has nurtured a pulation much in excess of what England's should , are now being revealed. Canada's more balanced onomy, in which no single occupation has to the me extent dominated others, is much more healthy. nd what economy could remain just as balanced ter a properly regulated ten-fold increase in popula-on? A more stable condition of life in the two untries would likely mean populations inversely oportional to the present ones.

Canadian agriculture needs to be revolutionised. he land could be farmed much more intensively an it is at present. But that change can only be fected in conjunction with an increase of the farming pulation and an increasing home market.

This is not a question of loyalty to the Commonwealth. It does not need to imply a decline of England and the ascent of the Dominions or other sparsely inhabited areas. But it is a problem demanding a realistic and planned approach. Face the fact that primary producers will not for ever be so naïve as to send their goods across oceans, and receive them back across the same ocean after having been transformed into consumers' goods.

There will be immediate problems of post-war trade relations. But more important is the long-term plan. The need is for a vast, but gradual and carefully regulated scheme of immigration from overpopulated to underpopulated areas. HARVEY MOATS

Canadian Fire Fighters,
c/o Canada House, London.

TELL YOUR M.P.

SIR,—I would like to make an appeal to democrats and Socialists everywhere arising out of an incident in the last Greek debate.

We now know that Winston Churchill instructed the B.B.C. in August to give no credit to E.L.A.S. for any act of resistance. His instruction was quoted by Aneurin Bevan and myself, and there was no denial. There was no denial: there could be none, in face of the document in Mr. Bevan's hands. Our present knowledge is useful to the democratic and socialist cause. But how much more useful it might have been if we had known at the time !

I am not asking that we should be inundated with information about every trivial racket and each tiny item of inefficiency ; democrats should, I think, try to do battle against these little incidents by taking their own courageous action on the spot.

But where things are seen to be going wrong in a big way, then I do ask those who see them to remember that they still have a House of Commons which contains a few fighting democrats and Socialists ; that there are still newspapers which will give publicity to anything important which is brought out on the floor of the House ; that public opinion can still make itself felt if the facts are known to the public in time ; and that the risks involved are infinitely less than those undertaken, say, by members of the Royal Engineers who investigate minefields. RICHARD ACLAND

House of Commons.

NARROW BOATS

SIR,—Perhaps the point of view of someone working on the Grand Union Canal might be of interest to those who read Mr. Pritchett's article on Mr. Rolt's book, *Narrow Boat*, though it must be remembered that nine months ago I had never seen a canal and that it is very hard to verify information gleaned up and down the cut. Mr. Pritchett states that in 1940 canals were "planned," and canteens set up. There are certainly no canteens for the people working canal longboats from London to Birmingham, nor would there be time to visit them if there were. I have no idea what further planning has been going on behind the scenes, but it is not much in evidence to those on the job.

Boatmen (and companies) have to make do and keep going under difficult conditions, dealing with old boats, faulty engines, broken lock gates, leaking banks and the miles of mud which remain undredged. It seems to be understood that everyone must keep on somehow till the end of the war ; what happens then is only a matter of guesswork among the boatmen. Some want shore jobs, but many still take pride in their boats and their work in spite of all the disadvantages it entails. I don't know the rules governing the rate per ton of freight, but I do know that, to make about £18 a trip, a pair of boats has to get round in a fortnight, and that means (with low water and consequent hold-ups at summit levels) days of anything from twelve to sixteen hours' work with no time off for meals and no Sundays or half-days; for, if the boatman gets an afternoon here and there, he has ropes, fenders, pumps and engine to attend to, and his wife arrears of washing and mending, since normally she manages the butty boat as well as the cooking, shopping, cleaning and the care of her often numerous children.

Now, £9 a week is not so much as it sounds, especially if the boats are fully manned, that is, if a steerer has a mate as well as his wife (or, if he is unmarried, two mates), and has to share the money. The work is hard on boots and coats and the ten extra coupons don't go very far. Boats are often worked "two-handed," either by a married couple or two men ; the pace is a little slower, and the work harder, but there is no third to provide for. Probably the children do more than is good for them, drawing heavy paddles, but they seem to grow up fine looking men and women with independent and individual characters and the best free manners I am ever likely to meet in England.

It seems to me that if the canals are planned at all they are still planned with more regard to profits than to people. With the few facts at my disposal I cannot see how under our present economic system the canals can pay except by exploitation of the boatmen, unless perhaps all forms of transport are nationalised and to a certain extent reconstructed.

Meanwhile there are few people who work harder and for less reward than these boatmen, who are, incidentally, very properly offended at being called gypsies, and who with their proud and free traditions

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FEBRUARY 5
William Gaunt
THE AESTHETIC ADVENTURE
This is the story of the crowded years between 1880 and 1910, years that buzzed with new ideas in the arts. The 'Aesthetic' eighties, and the 'naughty' nineties in Britain are the central focus of the theme, though the origin of the 'art for art's sake' movement is traced back to France in the 'fifties and forward into the Edwardian epoch. Impressionism, Aestheticism and Decadence are seen as part of a new adventure in the arts in the course of which they invaded not only the market-place but the drawing-room and the law courts. Here is a pageant of 'collective biography' in which appear the attractive and diverse figures of Baudelaire, Gautier, Verlaine, Ruskin, Whistler, du Maurier, Swinburne, Pater, Simeon Solomon, Wilde, Beardsley, Moore, Sickert and Roger Fry. [10s 6d net]
JONATHAN CAPE

are a true English type and finer men than those who, boasting a school education and a higher wage, keep them in economic slavery. Illiteracy has never been a bar to intelligence, and if the family life of the canals is to be broken up in order that a few more children may be cooped up indoors learning out of books instead of from people and things, then I am not sure I would not prefer the present extremely unsatisfactory position. Planning is an overworked word; what matters is who plans and what for. I wish I could feel the canals are to be planned by the right people and for right ends.

Boats 71, Phobos and Moon, Grand Union Canal. MERIOL TREVOR

GEORGE STEER

SIR,—May I add a personal note to what you have said about George Steer, whose life, already so rich in achievement, and so full of promise of even greater things, has been cut short in a maddeningly futile motor accident.

It is something to remember that into his thirty-five years he crowded a fullness of adventure and performance that a man twice his age could have envied. Of his work during this war only those who have been with him are fully competent to speak. But we need not wait to know something of the matters that already lay to his credit by eleven a.m. on September 3rd, 1939. Long before the beginning of the great showdown he had shown himself to be a dangerous and implacable enemy of all the things—aggression, blindness, ignorance and weakness—that made this war inevitable.

For him there was no dilemma about the relative might of the pen and the sword; he had already used both with savage efficiency, first in Abyssinia and later during the Spanish Civil War. To the outside world, his newspaper despatches and his books naturally took first place, though even from them it was possible to glean an idea that the lost—temporarily lost—causes that he followed had, perhaps, received from him something more than verbal support. Only his friends could know at the time how far he possessed, and had already been exercising, those qualities of the guerilla leader that he was to show later in full-dress warfare.

It was my good fortune to meet him before he left for Abyssinia, where he did a brilliant job for his paper—and later for a wider public with his book *Caesar in Abyssinia*. Those who have not read him have missed the full documentation of a campaign as shameful to one side as it was creditable to the other. George Steer was already on the side of the angels; they were dusky angels, and he was too straight and truthful to try or even want to whitewash them; he gave us the Ethiopian as he is. The upshot of it was that he left the impression of a balanced yet passionate conviction that if either of the two adversaries needed to change his skin it was not the Ethiopian.

Then came the Spanish War. Paris was a convenient base for his journeyings in and out of Spain. So I saw a good deal of him and really got to know him at last. It was perhaps fortunate for him that most of his time was spent with the Basques; whatever others did, *their* courage was untainted by the cruel excess of hate that caused such dreadful ravages elsewhere in the Peninsula. What made their restraint all the more splendid was the fact that it was one-sided.

The day after Bilbao had gone, and with it the despairing hopes of the Basques, there was a ring at the front door of my Paris flat. I opened the door myself—and recoiled from a scruffy little man with wild eyes, tousled hair, dressed in a filthy canvas jacket, nondescript trousers, and wearing those rope-soled canvas shoes known in France as *spadrilles*. A mousy-coloured stubble on his chin completed the elegant ensemble. Incidentally, he stank. As I stared, wondering who the devil it was, there came a high-pitched giggle and the fantastic creature said "It's all right, Tom, it's George Steer." Then I saw that he was pretty well at the end of his tether; so, sternly forbidding him to sit on my furniture, I went off and poured him out a veterinary dose of brandy. While he was gulping it down I turned on a bath and soon he was in it, prattling away feverishly while his discarded clothes lay stiffly on the floor awaiting their only possible fate—a funeral pyre.

There in my flat he stayed for a time; there, I am proud to say, he began what is to my mind the finest of his books *The Tree of Gernika*. Those who have read it will not easily forget one of the most moving stories ever written; above all the sublime self-sacrifice of the Basque sailors in the naval action against hopeless odds that he describes.

I shall not try to sum the man up. I do not even want to. What one can say is that he was an adventurer but an adventurer who was never out for himself, only for a cause. A slight exception may have existed in his idea of relaxation—which was shooting lions in South Africa with a bow and arrow. That apart, all his later manhood was spent in pursuit of bigger, more dangerous, less noble game.

He would have been a great Elizabethan, without the selfishness of some. He *was* a great Georgian. No doubt he had his faults, like those whom he championed. I hope so, indeed, though I cannot say that I noticed them in my dealings with him. With great respect and truth I can set forth my conviction that meanness, lying, and lack of courage were not among them. I can even state my belief in something more positive; it is that he was a very brave man, a very truthful one and a very generous-minded one. After that you may take him away and do your will upon him. THOMAS CADETT

LABOUR DISAGREEMENT

SIR,—Pontifex Minor says "The Labour Party is now always accused by dishonest Tories of having voted against rearmament before the war." Well, I'm not a Tory and I *want* to be honest, but I always thought that the Labour Party was dead against rearmament. Perhaps I was, and am, too much influenced by the action of the L.C.C. The Labour Party there abolished Corps in their own schools and asked aided ones to abolish O.T.C.s. These are facts not likely to be forgotten—nor has the mischief ever been repaired.

New College,
Oxford. R. B. HENDERSON

[Mr. Henderson and Pontifex Minor are both right. In the period immediately preceding the war Labour demanded a full policy of collective security and the great majority of the Party would have voted for arms to implement that policy if it had been accepted. It is also true that the Labour Party had a strong pacifist wing which was naturally strengthened by the Chamberlain policy of appeasement.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

GERMAN ANTI-NAZI SOLDIERS

SIR,—The Soldiers' Welfare Department of the Free German Movement in Great Britain was founded several months ago. Its purpose is to offer hospitality to and to provide comforts for German soldiers—refugees from Nazi oppression—fighting in the Allied Forces. Most of these men, and there are thousands of them, are frequently left to themselves when coming on leave as they have neither homes nor families to go to. Especially since leave has been granted to soldiers fighting on the Western Front, we shall have to expect more men in need of our active sympathy.

We wish, therefore, to address ourselves to your readers, in particular to those who are refugees from Nazi Germany, to help us in discharging our voluntary task. This can best be done by sending comforts, books, etc., to our committee, as well as offering accommodation.

We also invite all German Refugee Soldiers to avail themselves of our services. I. SCHMERGAL

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

LAST week I left Thomas Day sitting with ncurable rectitude amid the debris of his personal omedy. Comedy had marked him for herself. The disciple of Rousseau had no children of his wn to educate and, in fact, met his death by ying a new method of educating unbroken orses. The animal threw and killed him. The ge of Reason conceived both wild nature and he noble savage to be tamer than they were. When we read *Sandford and Merton* itself, we el that Day had this delusion about children. Would they have broken him? (We recall that he far more genial and practical Edgeworth had very difficult time with his eldest son, who had een brought up to Rousseau's prescription.) Or ould Day have broken them? The father-prig, ndlessly eloquent, mellifluously disposed to draw he ever-recurring moral, always pat with the ndentious anecdote, is a strain on his children. They relieve it at last by laughter. Perhaps Day ould have become the ridiculous father as *andford and Merton* is the father's ridiculous ook.

But not basically ridiculous. I have already uggested that *Sandford and Merton* is the fruit f the eighteenth century's humane belief in the ufficiency of man and the light of reason. It is ot merely a child's book with a purpose; it is a hild's book with a coherent philosophy, and that umane philosophy seems to me to have made *andford and Merton* far superior to the religious terature prescribed for children up to and, deed, after that time. In how many biographies o we read of children who were terrified by Foxe's *ook of Martyrs*? Some undoubtedly enjoyed he terrors, and I am not sure that it is wise to revent a child from transposing his inheritance f the guilt and crimes of human nature into the ages of imaginative literature. Throughout the ineteenth century Day's book was disliked ecause it was said to ignore religion. In fact it id not, for it contains a simple account of Christ's orality; but Day certainly was no friend to the ea of original sin, and he did not set out to take he growing mind from a consideration of its sponsibilities to the world outside itself, by gging it continually with morbid images of the orld within. If he was going to talk about hell, was the hell of poverty, the several hells which en make for their fellows, not the hell invented sadistic servants. One of the important aims Day—and also of Edgeworth, who has some aim to be called the father of modern education —was to free the children of the well-to-do from e corrupting influence of nurses, chamber- aids and butlers. But Day's philosophy must judged by the kind of interests it encouraged. o doubt, as Edgeworth at last came to see, we e not certain to choose virtue just because our ason tells us that vice leads to misery and un- ppiness; no doubt authority and discipline are quired. But what new fields the freedom of ilosophy opened to the curious mind! While e fearful and pious child was sobbing over the tastrophes of sin and was enclosed in the dank oisters of self-pity, the prim little rationalists of *ndford and Merton* were seeing the world. hey were exploring South America, studying ephants and tigers, conducting experiments th the sun and the moon, and learning about the ciety they lived in.

It is strange that such an uninspiring man as ay was, a man so full of crotchets and so devoid instinct, so poor in response to everything cept a generality, should have written a book limpid and alive as *Sandford and Merton.* He s one or two tastes of children with great ety: the complacency of children, their iggish and fierce delight in codes of conduct and nour; their love of a crude argument in black d white; their cocky moments of discovery; eir passion for being heroes. Day understands elementary principle that children are man beings who are growing taller and more powerful every day. "We are but little children strong"—not weak. The tears and the piety of the awful little Harry Sandford marks a stage in the "too noble by half" tradition; but I imagine that the child reader identifies himself with the wilful Tommy Merton, and attends only to the remarkable practical capabilities of Harry—he knows how to deal with snakes, for example, and can take a thrashing without turning a hair—without paying much attention to his virtues. Even the sentimentality about the honest poor, with its underhand appeal to childish pity, catches the child's love of showing off or making himself important. Old Mr. Barlow, to do him justice, has an inkling of this.

But the important charm of *Sandford and Merton* is extraneous to these matters. Day succeeds because he has created a kind of travelling zoo, an elegant and orderly zoo whose head keeper maintains a delightful and picaresque running commentary. Now he is telling the visitor about the elephant, about elephants he has seen, elephants in the wild, elephants he has tamed, how you ought to handle them and what happened to a tailor who made the mistake of playing a trick on one. The jungle, the native village, the regal procession are thrown in; and the whole stream of pictures flows smoothly by. They flick away before boredom sets in. We have the pleasure of listening to someone talking to himself. This musical and vivid manner comes straight out of Day's own character. He was a man who never stopped talking. The ladies found this suffocating. But a child would listen for ever, for Day was so delightfully unreal. "Is not that the country, Sir, where that cruel animal, the crocodile, is found?" asks Harry Sandford, when Mr. Barlow shows the human weakness of stopping for breath. The invitation is not to be resisted. "It is an animal," says the invincible Mr. Barlow, off again for another couple of pages, "that lives sometimes upon the land, sometimes in the water. It comes originally from an egg. . . ." Little Harry Sandford, so liable to be infected by every germ of virtue blowing casually on the air, catches this manner in his talks with Tom Merton. Harry has just been thrashed by the wicked Squire for refusing to tell him which way the hare went, and Tom is sympathising:

> H. Oh! it's nothing to what the young Spartans used to suffer.
>
> T. Who were they?
>
> H. Why, you must know they were a brave set of people that lived a great while ago; and as they were but few in numbers and were surrounded by enemies . . .

And so, by yet another happy dislocation of the narrative, the babbling stream of information resumes its cheerful flow.

Sandford and Merton is one of those books which have become rich because they have taken a long time to mature and have outgrown their original plan. Day's first notion was to re-write a number of well-known stories and fables for children; but he gradually saw that the stories could lead to Socratic dialogues and the arguments to more stories.

> Mr. B. But when a person is not good to him, or endeavours to hurt him, it is natural for an animal to run away from him, is it not?
>
> T. Yes.
>
> Mr. B. And then you say he is wild, do you not?
>
> T. Yes, Sir.
>
> Mr. B. Why, then, it is probable that animals are only wild because they are afraid of being hurt, and that they only run away from the fear of danger. I believe you would do the same from a lion or a tiger.
>
> T. Indeed I would, Sir.
>
> Mr. B. And yet you do not call yourself a wild animal?
>
> Tommy laughed heartily at this and said No. Therefore, said Mr. Barlow, if you want to tame animals, you must be good to them, and treat them kindly, and then they will no longer fear you, but come to you and love you. Indeed, said Harry, that is very true; for I knew a little boy that took a great fancy to a snake that lived in his father's garden; and, when he had the milk for breakfast, he used to sit under a nut tree and whistle, and the snake would come to him, and eat out of his bowl.
>
> T. And did it not bite him?
>
> H. No; he sometimes used to give it a pat with his spoon if it ate too fast; but it never hurt him.

The aim of Day was to give a tendentious education. He loathed all that was meant by a man of fashion. He loathed everything that Lord Chesterfield stood for, almost as much as Lord Chesterfield's son came to do. He loathed idleness, profligacy, the self-indulgence of the rich. He loathed the man of fashion's attitude to children. He was a plain Republican who believed that no one should eat who did not work. He was one of the earliest Abolitionists. All these views are directed at Tommy Merton, whose father was a rich slave owner:

> And what right have the people who sold the poor negroes to your father to sell them, or what right has your father to buy them? Here Tommy seemed a good deal puzzled, but at length he said: They are brought from a country that is a great way off, in ships, and so become slaves. Then, said Mr. Barlow, if I take you to another country in a ship I shall have a right to sell you?—T. No, but you won't, Sir, because I was born a gentleman. Mr. B. What do you mean by that, Tommy?—Why (said Tommy, a little confounded), to have a fine house, and fine clothes, and a coach, and a great deal of money, as my papa has. Mr. B. Then if you were no longer to have a fine house, nor fine clothes, nor a great deal of money, somebody that had all these things might make you a slave, and use you ill, and beat you, and insult you, and do whatever he liked with you?—T. No, Sir, that would not be right, neither, that anybody should use me ill. Mr. B. Then one person should not use another ill?—T. No, Sir. Mr. B. To make a slave of anybody is to use him ill, is it not?—T. I think so.—Mr. B. Then no one ought to make a slave of you?—T. No, indeed, Sir.—Mr. B. But if no one should use another ill, and making a slave is using him ill, neither ought you to make a slave of anyone else.—T. Indeed, Sir, I think not.

But if Day's instruction was tendentious and was written on the revolutionary impulse of the eighteenth century, his methods were also new. Lord Chesterfield's son was intended to be a miniature Lord Chesterfield, an awed and suitably diminished reflection of his father. Day's notion was that a child is a new and independent life. His education in fact and morality was to be gained in the course of living; he was not to inherit a convention. If father's gluttony leads to gout, if father's wealth leads to restlessness, cruelty and guilt, if mother's spoiling leads to ill-health, the child's rational faculty must be strengthened until he sees that other courses are better. Education is a guidance in the choice of good habits and the cultivation of a humane disposition.

This was revolutionary. So revolutionary that old Edgeworth was obliged to disinherit his own son who had taken the bit of freedom between his teeth. Reason, alas, could not control him; neither a parent's reason nor his own. Edgeworth hastened to warn parents that he and his friends had been labouring under an appalling error. This was years later; and there is no doubt that Tommy Merton was drawn from Edgeworth's dashing and wilful eldest son. And then there was another aspect to the revolution. The coddled manikin of the eighteenth-century portraits was given a healthier life. He was given lighter, freer clothes and was sent to harden himself to sun and cold. The Spartan ideal was established. But, excellent as a revolution and adventure, the Spartan ideal itself became a kind of grim, vested interest, a terrifying convention in the English public schools of the nineteenth century. The cult of nature became the cult of neglect. The gentleman of fashion was succeeded by the gentleman tough.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF ?

Years of Victory, 1802-1812. By ARTHUR BRYANT. *Collins.* 12s. 6d.

No history of the Napoleonic period is complete nowadays without a flash-forward to the Hitlerian epoch in which we live. The curious resemblances of events, the parallel instances of behaviour are too striking to be ignored : Trafalgar and Waterloo loom up as harbingers of an eventual triumph over the modern enemy. Stressing the analogy between the two eras is not only plausible but extremely gratifying to our national pride. With this end in view, Mr. Bryant, a most fluent and scholarly writer, is producing what may well prove a classic history of the earlier struggle. There are three movements to his patriotic sonata. The first, *andante*, covered the inconclusive first round of the battle with France, 1793–1802 : *Years of Endurance* he calls them. The present volume, *allegro con brio*, carries on from the Peace of Amiens to the eve of Napoleon's imbecile march to Moscow. In the *finale* Mr. Bryant promises to explain how the triumph of England's free institutions over Continental despotisms was dissipated in the quagmire of peace and disillusion.

Let us examine the justification of the claim that after 130 years' interval the history of England is now repeating itself. Mr. Bryant invokes "the unchanging truths of human nature and geography" to prove his case, and appeals to some formidable evidence. Napoleon, like Hitler, was hoisted to power on a wave of revolutionary ideas, and harnessed the destructive force of these ideas to his military machine. The resistance of his enemies was undermined by quisling invitations to collaborate, while his own armies were supported by fanatical self-confidence.

After victory collaboration was soon supplanted by virtual annexation (*vide* the fate of the puppet Dutch and Cisalpine Republics); but where Hitler employed Gauleiters and Reichs Commissars, Napoleon used his convenient tribe of relations. Even the very words "a New Order" were applied by Napoleon in 1810 to describe his dominion over Europe. In character the two men were totally different: it was their dictatorial situation, the absolute corruption of absolute power, that made them think and act alike. Take Napoleon's behaviour towards England during the Peace of Amiens—comparable with Hitler's after the Peace of Munich. He had to deal with the appeasing Tory Prime Minister (Addington = Chamberlain) of a mistrustful nation. His object was, either by force or by fraud, to prevent English interference with his plans to dominate Europe. Which method did he employ ? He tried both at once—with the result that his fraud was discovered before his force was ready, and he found himself at war before he was prepared for invasion. Even the details of the misfire of Napoleon's diplomacy in 1803 are strangely anticipatory of August 1939. If it came to war, Russia would be the only effective ally for England. By an offer to partition Turkey Napoleon bribed Russia to take sides with France. By dictator's logic the English were diddled ; they must climb down and keep the peace until he was ready for them. By English logic the dictator was proved to be incorrigible ; and war was declared.

England's reaction to the threat of invasion (in 1803 as in 1940) is one of the finest examples of "the unchanging truth of human character." Hundreds of thousands of men at once volunteer—not to join the Army, but to defend their homes in some martial but unspecified manner. For this they demand the immediate provision of weapons, uniforms and drill-sergeants—everything in fact which the Army can spare least. The authorities are delighted by the patriotic ardour but horrified at the drain on equipment. They offer pikes. Pikes are indignantly rejected. By the time the volunteers have any military value the danger of invasion has become negligible ; but the country has enjoyed the taste of its mettle, and the popularity of the war is assured.

Dealing with the campaigns on sea and land Mr. Bryant is at his best, enriching the gaunt outlines of strategy with a wealth of human interest. The unparalleled fortitude of the English sailors in their constant blockade of an entire continent in all weathers is conveyed in letters home from admirals and midshipmen. The conduct of the British Army in the Peninsula is illuminated by the groans of the Commissariat. The battles are recorded from the lips of the rank and file as well as the general's despatches. The heroes, Nelson, Collingwood, Sir John Moore, Wellington, dominate their spheres of action from their natural height without the adjunct of a pedestal. I deliberately refrain from quotations and a complete summary. Mr. Bryant is too good an historian for readers to be excused reading *Years of Victory* by sucking the gist of it from a review.

England undoubtedly saved herself from Napoleon by her own exertions, but did she save Europe by her example ? The flattering claim will not stand scrutiny. Our various Continental allies could not follow the example of an island, protected by command of the sea. A terrier cannot follow the example of an eagle attacking a wolf : he can't peck and fly away. (All through the Peninsular War Wellington reserved the right, if things became too hot, to clear out from Lisbon, bag and baggage.) The Allies were all following the law of self-preservation, which affects nations as much as individuals. Fear is the most primitive and powerful incentive to co-operation. Was England ever more nearly unanimous a nation than in July 1940 ? But if fear is a social amalgam the cessation of fear is a solvent, releasing all the suppressed private ambitions. And if readers of Mr. Bryant can rejoice to-day in history repeating itself, it is not so pleasant for them to remember why it does so : because we learn from history that we do not learn from history.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

SEVEN DAYS AT ARNHEM

Arnhem Lift. The Diary of a Glider Pilot. *Pilot Press.* 5s.

It has been said that, in our literature, we celebrate defeats rather than victories. Hardly true : for every Dunkirk there have been at least two Crécys. What we do glorify, again and again, is the struggle of the few against the many. Arnhem seems likely to become a legendary name of this war. The first impression of a huge and invincible descent quickly gave way to the fact of a handful of men hemmed in by the enemy : how, with what weapons and what heart, they fought, remained a matter for conjecture. We can't guess such things without being told calmly and exactly. Such an account, the best description of fighting I have come across outside the tank battle in *Prisoner from Alamein*, is given by the anonymous author of *Arnhem Lift*. The adventure was incredible, however rigorously trained for ; the writer is as cool with a pen as he showed himself to be in action. I have read his narrative twice, and I shall read it again, because it distils experience with a precision which every writer must admire. He ends with these words : "the seven days had given me seven years of experience and confidence ; I knew what I was like. . . ." And that is the effect of his book, though apart from the events at Arnhem he tells us nothing about himself.

What happened ? Descent, position-finding, improvisation, delaying and holding out, withdrawal. A mixture of superb coolness and bluff kept the initiative. During most of the time "Glider Pilot" was in the attic of the end house of a row. The Germans infiltrated the houses opposite in the daytime and retired at night. They had a self-propelled gun in a wood which with clockwork regularity would approach along the road, threatening annihilation, and it had to be halted ; this could only be done by means of a little Piat effective at a hundred yards range ; the gun would then hesitate and awkwardly retire. The road was kept clear of infantry by Bren fire from the same attic. This was the daily routine. The situation was that the enemy could have wiped out this slender outpost if they had attacked, but they didn't dare to attack. They never discovered how few men were opposing them, how meagrely they were equipped, what positions they held. The warfare revealed by "Glider Pilot" has no lines or frontiers, resembling rather a game of halma over back gardens and plantations in which both sides, closely interwoven, are stealthily on the move. "Glider Pilot" spent one afternoon crouching in a rubbish pit two feet away from Nazi soldiers; when he went on patrol he could watch them and hear them refusing to obey commands to advance from their cover ; it was as easy to penetrate to the Nazi strong-point as to reach the British Divisional H.Q., and either was safer than passing houses or slit-trenches occupied by the Poles. A few Dutch families remained hidden in cellars, the stockpot was always boiling, there were no cigarettes. Attacks sprang up and dwindled away.

> After a few minutes, the signal for my morning session in the attic was heard from the top of the street, and, calling to Lt. X, I fetched the Piat and went up the stairs, quite confident and taking my time. By now we knew the slow and careful approach of our old friend, the German self-propelled gun.
>
> This morning, though, they had a surprise for us. They manoeuvred two of them into position, one on each side of the road. The terrific small arms attack seemed to show that they were working up for real business. We were glad we had fetched those twenty bombs last night, as with two S.P.'s firing shells incessantly as they advanced, we had to lay a screen across the road. This was our only hope of stopping them. They stopped dead for a while, just out of range and then retired slowly. The small arms activity died down to normal, and we knew that we had repelled them again, anyhow for the moment.
>
> It suddenly became a pleasant Sunday morning. Our regular Arnhem hotpot was simmering, the Red Cross appeared on the streets, and everyone came down for a breather to see how the food was getting on and how the others were . . .

Everyone had miraculous escapes : "Glider Pilot" escaped with one bullet through his shoulder strap and another exploding the flash eliminator of the Bren gun he was firing. (In reading his story one has continually to remind oneself that he is a pilot and not a soldier.) His courage also was prodigious. He walked up to one houseful of Germans and ordered them to surrender, which they would have done but for an officer who ran out screaming a command. This he describes as factually as though the incident had happened to someone else. With the same complete honesty he tells of occasions when he panicked, of the terrible moment when, having thrown five grenades into the window next door, he discovered that its occupants were his own comrades. They had picked up each grenade (which had a five-second fuse) as it fell and thrown it harmlessly into the garden.

The withdrawal after seven days was the most dangerous phase of the whole operation. It was accomplished at night, silently, at first from house to house, then across roads, through woods where the dripping rain covered the sound of footsteps, until they reached a white tape leading across a field to the Rhine. Here, rather than wait for the single ferry, "Glider Pilot" plunged in fully armed ; he had to sink in midstream to disengage the equipment and the tightly slung Sten gun that would have drowned him. That night he slept in a bed. Two days later he was back in the English aerodrome from which he had started.

> Our huts had been locked and left just as they were when we left them on Monday morning. We took the keys, went in and sat down on our beds. The four of us looked round the hut. There were eighteen empty beds.

G. W. STONIER

AN IMPORTANT BOOK

thedral City. By Thomas Sharp. Published for the Durham City Council by the *Architectural Press.* 5s.

A good beginning goes far towards success; d in their preparations for the future of their y the people of Durham have begun well. The ty Council not only had the foresight to appoint r. Sharp as their town-planning consultant but ve him well-chosen terms of reference. He s to prepare a development plan and report ich "shall have particular reference to the hisical and architectural character of the city." is recognises the importance, often ignored, of visual aspect of town-planning.

This book is Mr. Sharp's official report based these terms of reference. It is presented in pular form in order to emphasise both to the izens of Durham and to their brother citizens ewhere that "planning isn't a mystery like her mathematics, only to be enjoyed by a few ty souls with master minds." Although it was obably wise to present it in this manner, bear- in mind that town-planning should be hieved by democratic means and that popular pport can only be obtained through popular lightenment, nevertheless the document has reby lost to some degree the authoritative tone e expects in an expert's report.

But the book is full of good sense. It begins th a logical analysis of the present city, its ysical and architectural character, its social ucture and functions. It then proceeds to a sis for planning, dealing successively with the cessary limits of development, communications, blic buildings, housing, service buildings and en spaces. Each of these problems is sanely alysed, and followed by proposals full of good soning. Most people have now read something the principles of town-planning. In this report y can see these principles applied.

The constant emphasis on a visual approach especially welcome, for town-planning is an as well as a science. Mr. Sharp reminds us the falsity of the popular idea of town-planning being the widening and straightening of streets d the "opening-up" of historic buildings. He peals for an awakening of the artist's vision of town as "urban landscape"—a vision which s the subtle grouping of buildings, the effects varying widths of street, the changing silhouettes on the skyline. His realisation that the delights of a city derive largely from effects of spatial relationship is, for example, revealed in his description of Owengate:

> The street is short, curving, hilly and narrow. It climbs steeply up to Palace Green, with a glimpse of the Cathedral at its head. Then, at the top of the rise, at the head of the curve, the confined view having thus far excited one's feelings of mystery and expectation, the street suddenly opens out into Palace Green, broad, spacious, elevated, with a wide expanse of sky: and there, suddenly, dramatically, the whole fine length of the Cathedral is displayed to the immediate view.

The author's concern for architectural considerations has led him also to prepare a plan of the city on which the architectural quality of existing buildings is indicated: this analysis seems a most valuable addition to the surveys usually prepared, and the examples should be followed in other towns. A similar concern has led to a recommendation that advertisement signs should be firmly controlled. Although added as a final note, this should not be viewed as a minor recommendation. A great deal of the unsightliness of our cities is due to wanton advertising, and this is a matter which should receive further consideration on a national scale. Although the Ministry of Town and Country Planning has touched on the problem of hoardings in the countryside, the corresponding evil in the city still remains to be overcome.

In view of the author's concern for æsthetic considerations, it is disappointing that the coloured perspective sketches of the proposed central improvements should show so little visual sensibility. Bilious in colour and lacking a sense of scale, these drawings do not do justice to the scheme. Nor are the line drawings showing the proposed buildings much more encouraging: the buildings lack coherence and form. There is a danger that many readers will unfairly judge the scheme on the illustrations.

No review of Durham or its plans is complete without mention of the power station which the Electricity Authorities propose to build within view of the Cathedral. When completed, this generating station is to have chimneys 350ft. high and three cooling towers 250ft. high and 90ft. in diameter at the top. In comparison, the great central tower of the Cathedral is only 218ft. high and 30ft. square. Mr. Sharp has most convincingly presented the case against the erection of this power station, supporting his contention on social and economic grounds as well as on the æsthetic consideration that such a power station would disfigure every view of the city. I understand that the proposal is still under the consideration of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning. Let us hope that the Ministry will do all in its power to prevent this desperate project from being realised, for, in the words of Mr. Sharp, "to build this power station would be an act of blind and brutal philistinism."

Ralph Tubbs

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WITHOUT TEARS

Poetry for You: A Book for Boys and Girls on the Enjoyment of Poetry. By C. Day Lewis. *Blackwell.* 4s. 6d.

At the end of his book Mr. Day Lewis invites his readers to send him questions about any difficulties that may have arisen in their minds. He tells them: "This book is for you, and I want it to be as good as possible; so, if I get some interesting questions from my readers, I'll ask my publisher to let me write an extra chapter, answering them, to be included in the next edition of the book." At a first reading one would say that he has foreseen—and, since he has been a schoolmaster, probably had to face—most of the questions about poetry which children are likely to ask, and most of the inhibitions which they are likely to feel. Mr. E. M. Forster has spoken of the Englishman's undeveloped heart. Under bad guardianship the heart may begin its "undevelopment" very early; and with the process there may grow a fear of the more expressive and expansive forms of art. Words do frighten many English people, a fact which may contribute to explaining why, in a country devoted to music, provincial orchestras flourish and provincial opera is non-existent, and why the serious artist neglects the theatre.

Mr. Day Lewis knows all this; he does not, of course, hurl it at the children. He knows his audience, and he treats it wisely, disarming it gently of possible hostility. The children are told why poetry is not "daft," and why, if it is useless, its uselessness does not matter. They are also told, more daringly, that poets are not soft. It is a book in which a certain "writing down" is inevitable, but it could scarcely be more tactfully done. Perhaps at times Mr. Day Lewis is even more tactful, and more conciliatory, than he needs to be: I do not imagine that girls would wholly care for the distinction he occasionally makes between poems good for girls and

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The late Sir John Maynard was preparing, at the time of his death an authoritative and impartial summary of the issues, claims and contentions of both parties. The plan he laid down and the material he collected have been embodied in the present study edited by Serge Konovalov, Professor of Russian at Oxford University. The problem of Russo-Polish relations is exercising the minds of all thoughtful people in this country.
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poems good for boys; or that children would be pleased at the assumption that love does not generally interest them—it is public discussion of it that they do not like. These, however, are tiny and disputable points. They do not flaw a book which is excellently planned and admirable in its conversational tone. I think that even older boys and girls, who as they begin to develop an interest in style sometimes prefer formality, would be won over by it. And, apart from its possibilities for children, it may also prove invaluable as a guide to the teacher of poetry; I found myself wishing I had had it to read in my own days as a teacher, for it suggests a continuous line of persuasive approach and covers an extensive field. And it realises what many teachers forget: that children sometimes write poetry themselves.

The teaching of poetry to children is enormously difficult; it demands more time than is normally given to it, and, from the teacher, a genuine love of poetry and a belief that, apart from an occasional bad year, the amount of poetry worth reading is continually increasing. Which is as much as to say that it also demands a youthful instructor. It has often been pointed out that it is not easy to appreciate the verse written by others after one reaches a certain age. I profoundly hope there are more exceptions to this than I have met; but for the schoolmaster the safety-curtain between past and present usually comes down with a firmer clank than for the literary man less fettered. The young teacher who reads this book will find a good deal of ground marked out for him; it may even help in his own education. There are chapters on the "use," the beginnings, and the instruments of poetry; there is an analysis in detail of how one of the author's own sonnets on childhood came to be written; there are chapters on poetry as argument, on how to "judge" a poem, and so on. Towards the end the book contains material which probably sixth-form children alone will be likely to appreciate—and even for them it seems exacting to urge that efforts should be made to distinguish between true sentiment and the sentimental.

According to Q, Sir Walter Scott "held that the cultivation of a child's imagination was at least as beneficial as the drilling of any other faculty." In schools, literature (and poetry in particular) is the "subject" most likely to assist in this. The teaching of it is hampered in every way; not least by the restrictive syllabuses of the School Certificate year, during which education in any good sense of the word is usually suspended. That year is the despair of the conscientious teacher; and, openly or surreptitiously, it is to children at that period of their school life that I should most like Mr. Day Lewis's genial, well-considered book to be given. HENRY REED

Local Government and Civil Liberty. By ELIZABETH A. ALLEN. *National Council of Civil Liberties.* *6d.*

As we now have the promise both of municipal elections at the end of the year and the merging of the parliamentary and local government franchise, it is time people began to pay a little more attention to local politics. It will be no easy task to get the machinery of local democracy working again, but both the extension of social services after the war and the addition of some millions to the local government electorate make it urgent that a start should be made to awaken public interest. Miss Allen's pamphlet is an excellent guide to active citizenship. She has succeeded in giving a brief outline of the structure and powers of local authorities—in itself a difficult task—and, what is more important, in showing how individuals and organisations can make the machine work more efficiently and democratically. Anybody who is politically active cannot afford to do without this fine booklet, which is as valuable to the experienced as to the novice. As Secretary of the National Council of Civil Liberties Miss Allen has seen examples of the misuse of democratic rights in local government and, with that knowledge, is able to make useful suggestions for greater public participation in and control of local affairs.

Hubert Phillips's Heptameron. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The puzzle, the quiz, the crossword, the competition, the problem (verbal or mathematical, Chess or Bridge): such exercises in amateur sleight-of-brain are no doubt as old as the world. This surprising volume describes itself as a miscellany of entertainment and it resembles those compendiums of games which delighted our childhood and continue to amuse the guilty leisure of our middle age. The ingenuity displayed is fabulous, the difficulty often seemingly formidable, and a high proportion of the problems are mathematical; but at the end of the book, inviting the brazen dishonesty of those who cheat at Patience, is an index of solutions. Here is a specimen, chosen at random:

> *Crazy Island.* Two races dwell on Crazy Island, the Good Guys and the Bad Guys. They look exactly alike. But a Good Guy, when asked a question, always tells the truth, and a Bad Guy always lies.
>
> A visitor to the island came across a group three natives, whom we will call No. 1, No. 2, a No. 3. He put one question to each of them. H are the questions and answers:
>
> Question put to No. 1: "Is No. 2 a Good G or a Bad Guy?"
>
> Answer: "A Bad Guy."
>
> Question put to No. 2: "Do No. 1 and No. belong to the same race, or to different races?"
>
> Answer: "They belong to the same race."
>
> Question put to No. 3: "Is No. 2 a Good G or a Bad Guy?"
>
> Answer: "A Good Guy."
>
> *Now you should be able to discover to which of t two races each of these three natives belongs.*

Those to whom this kind of thing does not appeal w prefer "The Great Pat-Ball Controversy," or perha be intrigued by "Mrs. Allblah," a Jumbled Wor or a Pentad. And when you have yourself reach hair-tearing point, it is always fun to plague the frie or relation who detests all kinds of puzzle and who continual absorption in a book is a source of annoyan to you.

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No. 783

Set by Fred Oyster

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---

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 7

Set by William Dixon

The usual prizes are offered for the best paragra of not more than 250 words reproducing D Johnson's opinion of *The Waste Land* assumi that the doctor has included Mr. T. S. Eliot in h *Lives of the Poets.*

Report by William Dixon

Several competitors under-estimated Johnson's sen of justice. He could be expected to acknowled those values in the poem which remain constant f every age. Some entries were spoilt by irrelevanc and others contained phrases out of key. Able Seam J. R. Till, Jean R. Williams, and E. W. Fordha divide the first prize; while Frank Spooner a Granville Garley divide the second. R. W. Ketto Cremer, R. J. P. Hewison, T. Smalley, and Charl Race deserve honourable mention. We are sor there is no space to print their entries.

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ust first have satisfied the publick Judgement of his y by familiarity with the rules; and multilingual nnotations will but explain the sources without ndoning the conduct of a poet who sets down his ncies, however beneficent, in incorrect specimens of rsification. Of this precept, though of little else, e author of *The Waste Land* is clearly ignorant; r we cannot allow so *diligent* an historian to be *reless*. The metre is as irregular as the diction is nsuited to the awful theme; such meagre respect is id to the unities that the traveller perambulates om Margate Sands to Carthage after only five lines intermediary ratiocination; and quotations from e Sacred Histories are introduced with no more gard for continuity than a garbled snatch from oldsmith, in which the central character is little tter than a w——. It is as though an eavesdropper a tavern were to report back to his master without ving tarried long enough at the object of his enquiries obtain an intelligence so lucid that it cannot be sputed. Let no one deny the poet his occasional licities, his knowledge of antiquity, the excellence his topographical descriptions, and a kind of rverse piety that suggests a cerebral awareness of ther than a proper faith in the Supreme Being; but, general, we must conclude that poets are not the st plenipotentiaries of Minerva and commit *The aste Land* to the obscurity from which it originated.

ABLE SEAMAN J. R. TILL

If the Father of Criticism has rightly denominated etry "an imitative art," Eliot loses his right to the me of poet, for he copies neither nature nor life, ither paints the forms of matter, nor the operations intellect. He is a man of learning, but unluckily solving to show it in poetry, if his *Waste Land*, king both rhyme and metre, can be accounted ch; he produces only a mass of materials forced gether by ingenious absurdity. His learning structs and his subtlety surprises, but the reader, ough he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased. hile we praise the power of his invention, we plore the mingling of the familiar with the lyric, h intensity with low fictions, the numerous quotans and references from other authors, the force of ich is generally lost, for the mind is turned more on the original than the thought which it illustrates. oreover ideas which might be great and forceful in neral expression are weakened and made ridiculous being expressed in small instances. As for that asure which arises from the known measure of mbers, and uniform structure of stanzas, it is stroyed by the absence of rhyme or metre. The ought of the poem is as varied as the form; heteroneous ideas are compelled together into an incoherent whole, most of which is so obscure that I cannot understand it, so that while I admire Eliot's fertility of fancy and depth of learning, I can derive little pleasure from the poem.

JEAN R. WILLIAMS

Many repetitions are necessary to fix in the mind lines not understood; I have therefore considered *The Waste Land* more frequently, and weighed it more nicely than any other of Eliot's works.

I find that it is not of a dignity sufficient to merit an elaborate criticism. Its true meaning is so uncertain and remote that, although sought by many, it can be discovered by few. Whether those votaries who believe they have discovered it obtain due compensation for their labour I will not stay to inquire.

It is a common error to think that admirable which is only singular. We have here the grossly singular and the tediously obscure; we have neither the melody of numbers nor the easiness of prose. The versification is rough and harsh and, although some fits or rhyming may be discovered by the curious, our author is of those who conceive that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. Some lines, as is allowed in the pedantickal Notes, are borrowed; they are those which occasion the least disgust; others want something of propriety. In the greater part of *What the Thunder Said* all punctuation is omitted; I know not why, nor to what degree this singularity may be thought by the poet to clarify his verse.

To deny him any elegancies would be unjust; but who will enjoy them save those hardy adventurers who can also endure the fantastick foppery of Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata, as a line of English verse?

E. W. FORDHAM

In perusing *The Waste Land* the reader must conclude that, in the time of Eliot, either minds were phlegmatick, and careless of elegance, or that men were so distracted by the brittleness of the age, that their attention must needs be assaulted by conceits, the like of which Donne and Cowley would scarce have employed even during their wildest extravagances of wit. The satirick or ludicrous parts of the sensibility, lacking the discipline of classick numbers, intrude upon sublimity; as in the image of a lady's *combinations* drying in the *sun's last rays*. Yet this *unification of sensibility* oftentimes produces an effect not unworthy of admiration; as when, in the part commencing with a copy of the famous speech of Enobarbus in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, it is shown, with great subtlety, that the splendours of Love had become *synthetick*, or had sunk into sordidness.

Like the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, Eliot was analytic; but, whereas *their* images were dispersed to little purpose, *his* formed a true microcosm. Among many fantastick and broken verses, which mock the banality of his age, or make echoes from the past, he scatters *fragments* from many authors, and from exotick places. It was to *shore* his disillusioned spirit against the *ruins* of civilisation that he culled these fragments from the recesses of his memory. To illuminate some of the esoterick passages he appends some *Notes*; but these, for the most part, leave the confused reader worse confounded. Yet Wit has always flourished under divers guises; and, notwithstanding such archaick imagery as that of *a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire*, from this chaotick mass may be distilled some essence of truth.

FRANK SPOONER

Of all Eliot's poems, *The Waste Land* is most certain to be his preservative from oblivion. It expresses the disillusion of an age against a varying landscape of desolation, and it shines with reflected light, light borrowed from classical mythology, Hindustani and "From Ritual to Romance." There is in it shown a variety of excellence and a degree of originality, but the poet often descends to display his wide learning with a pedantic ostentation. An allusion is to Eliot, what luminous vapours are to a traveller; he follows it until it surely leads him out of his way into the mire, and a single scholiast is not to be expected to make a compleat explanation of an author so abounding in allusions and light hints, drawn from an extensive range of reading. His deliberate obscurities Eliot has endeavoured to elucidate with notes; this is a mistake, and the general effect of the work is weakened, for the reader is wearied and diverted from the principal subject. In short, I do not admire the poem and I cannot bear the stile. It is my considered opinion, expressed before on more than one occasion, that most English poetry written in blank verse could be changed advantageously into rhyme; *The Waste Land* is not an exception, and such ingenious but unconvincing poems are bound to expose their author to the censure of criticks.

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